WHAT'S WRONG WITH ROOTS
THE FAILURE OF BARBARA JORDAN'S SUCCESS

The Washington Monthly

MARCH 1979/$1.50

Who Killed The Steel Industry?

A. The Union
B. The Companies
C. The Government
D. All of the Above

Annual Political Book Issue

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Twenty million years ago, the site of Marsha's discovery was a seashore. Now it's 40 miles from the sea, and half a mile down.

Marsha Green took a closer look at a 20-million-year-old seashore and found this new gas field.

For geologist Marsha Green, it was a case of reviewing the evidence just one more time and coming up a winner. After only two years with Gulf Oil, Marsha discovered a new and untapped gas field.

Spotted a trend

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Marsha persuaded Gulf management to drill a series of exploratory wells.

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Gulf

Gulf people: meeting the challenge.

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Letters

You have lately called for the triumph of "patriotic, public interests" over "selfish, private" ones—an unobjectionable piety, though reminiscent of the sentiments which gave us such flawed schemes as civil service. But with the publication of Joseph Smith's "The Future is In Florida" [December, 1978] you get appallingly specific:

"Florida shows that old people, banded together as a special interest group, could be the most powerful—and the most selfish —of the political interest groups," writes Smith.

What a difference a couple of generations makes: the erstwhile "malefactor of great wealth" has become a widowed septuagenarian living modestly in Miami.

Opening with a gesture towards journalistic balance, Smith acknowledges that the elderly lobby is responsible for a host of major, statewide consumer reforms. He then begins his counterattack by citing the "Great Traffic Light Wars" that the elderly have been waging locally, to make Florida's streets safe for pedestrians. His deification of the automobile made me wonder if I had not opened *The American Motorist* by mistake.

He pictures the elderly as obsessed with crime despite being infrequently victimized, and then asserts that many are habitual thieves. Nonsense: the elderly are vastly more law-abiding than the rest of us. More importantly, they maintain their low victimization rates by abandoning perilous freedoms (like taking an evening walk), appreciating that crime, like pneumonia, entails more ominous risks in old age.

Smith complains about elderly rip-offs of the public purse, like getting subsidized bus fares. Yet it is the physical isolation of older people that most often poisons their lives; would that there *were* affordable bus systems. (St. Petersburg and other Florida communities offer practically no public transportation.)

He rails against the elderly's "entitlement syndrome," exemplified by a woman driving her Cadillac to a nutrition center to sponge a $1.34 meal. His Reaganite perspective predictably overlooks the more common pattern among older Americans of spurning benefits rightfully theirs as being too much like charity.

Two other omissions, of many:

- If we required every older American to live on the meagre stipend of a VISTA volunteer ($3804 a year), about half would become wealthier than they are now.
- In St. Petersburg (and probably other Florida cities) 80 percent of the retirement community is composed of quondam couples separated by the death of one spouse within six months of settling there. The not-atypical, surviving widow is a stranger in a strange land, bereft of family, friends and companions.

That you chose to portray such as these as selfish enemies of the public interest—flippant cartoons and all—was unworthy of *The Monthly*.

JOHN HOLLISTER STEIN
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Stein is deputy director of the Criminal Justice and the Elderly program of the National Council of Senior Citizens.

The author replies:

The National Council on Aging says in its 1978 *Fact Book on Aging* "the older population is not as a whole sick and frail, or poor, or forgotten residents of institutions, or consumed with unproductive leisure." I paraphrased this assertion at the beginning of my article, because I considered it a balanced premise from which to proceed. I still do. Let me offer one additional statistic: I have been working with officials of the Florida Institute on Aging for the past year, and their figures indicate that only 14.8 per cent of those over 65 in the state are below the poverty level.

As for the number of elderly who refuse free benefits, I am aware of them too. Would that there were many more. I am a member of the local body in Jacksonville which runs the free meals program mentioned in my article. Recipients of our federally-funded lunches are asked to contribute what they can afford, so that more people can eat. Contributions average six cents per meal. There are 16 meal sites. Persons at the two places in the poorest neighborhoods served by the program contribute five times more than any others. The four sites in the highest income areas contribute almost nothing.

I agree that the elderly should be heard, and their legitimate needs met. But I also want to live in a country where people consider the common good as well as their own, and where the needs of the vast majority of the elderly are met in the process of satisfying those common needs—not primarily through programs that automatically assume that the elderly are separate from the rest of society, thereby contributing to the separation.

The lawyers in our firm had quite a chuckle over the blatant inconsistency in your December "Tilting At Windmills" column. You snicker at law firms for their "subtle" announcements when former government lawyers join their staffs. Yet, later in the same column, you "subtly" mention that James Fallows, a former White House speech writer, has joined the staff of your magazine [as a contributing editor].

Shame on you.

DAVID BORTMAN
Chicago, Illinois

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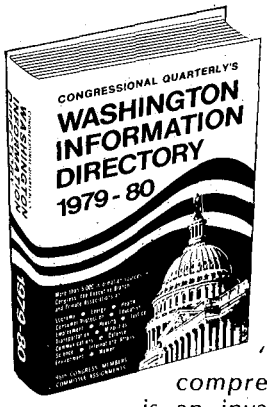

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Tilting at Windmills

One of the truly delightful results of the Balanced Budget Amendment would be its effect on banks. As the national debt disappeared, so would the bankers' ability to make an easy living by buying, at higher interest rates than the banks pay to depositors, the various bills and notes the Treasury issues to finance the national debt. . . . Of course the best solution to the national debt is simply to cancel it, except for Series E bonds, which should be paid off double to make up for the way they have been used over the years to con the average man into giving his savings to the government in return for measly interest. Only the rich would be hurt, and we would have an immediate budget surplus. . . .That the readers of this magazine are spared long articles on subjects like the above, and instead find them only in this column, can be traced to what I call subordinate power.

Subordinate power is a fact of organizational life that I don't believe I've ever seen discussed. Yet in my own experience it is a powerful force in the lives of most organizations. The man in charge wants to be liked by the people who work for him. And he wants them—at least those who are good—to continue working for him. Both of these factors mean that, just as the employee tries to please the boss, the boss will try to please his employee. I can think of many times I have been saved from folly by employees who talked me into a more sensible course ("Put it in the column, Charlie").

I can also think of times when I've made mistakes because of a desire to please the people who worked with me. When I was working in the government, the director of my agency doubled my modest bureaucratic empire by adding a new division, and I was anxious to win the respect and affection of its employees. So I immediately endorsed their budget request for $1 million dollars and worked hard to get it through Congress. The congressmen gave us $500,000. And it turned out, even by using every end-of-the-fiscal-year spending technique known to the bureaucratic world, we were able to get rid of only $385,000.

So subordinate power can be harmful. You see its worst effects in the new cabinet secretary who brings to the job a determination to reform his department and quickly becomes the prisoner of his minions. But it also has its good side—a side that more employees should be aware of. If you are talented, and if you have skills your boss needs or thinks he needs, you have real power to influence him to do what is right, what is in the best interest of your organization and your country.

Of all the things that went down the drain with the demise of the counter-culture, zen pong is the loss I most regret. In case it escaped your notice, it was a version of ping pong in which the object was for two players working together to see how long they could keep the ball going back and forth, playing well but not trying to defeat each other. To me, the worst aspect of American culture is its vicious competitiveness. Why on earth can't we gain our satisfaction from doing what we do as well as we possibly can? Why do we also have to beat the shit

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out of the other guy? I don't think we do—I still like zen pong. . . . Not long ago we reported that the federal chiefs (GS-18s) finally outnumbered the Indians (GS-1s) in Washington. Evidently the same thing had already happened in the aircraft industry, according to William Greider of *The Washington Post*, who writes:

"The aircraft industry has become top-heavy with the overhead costs of maintaining nonproduction employees, the managers and engineers who do not make airplanes but who plan, design, and sell them. In 1975, for the first time, these nonproduction employees outnumbered the production employees." . . .

The Department of Environmental Protection of nearby Montgomery County, Maryland, has provided us with our Bureaucratic Hero for 1979. He is Wayne Norris, who will be out of work on July 1 because he told his boss that his job as "development process coordinator" was unnecessary. He said he was no more than a "glorified clerk." If bureaucrats generally would face this kind of truth, we could cut the government payrolls in half.

The building where we work is being torn down. It is one of the last low-rent buildings in downtown Washington. It will be sorely missed by organizations like Ralph Nader's and ours, for whom the amount of rent we have to pay can be the difference between life and death. It is also an example of the way to make urban life more livable, for it mixes apartments with office space, so if you work late or come in early there's always life in the building—someone going downstairs to eat at Sholl's Cafeteria (which, because of its low prices and good food, functions as a sort of kitchen for the entire building) or heading for the laundry room with a load of clothing, or bringing in groceries. One way to deal with both urban sterility and the housing shortage would be to require landlords who build big office buildings to reserve a third or so of their space for apartments at reasonable rents. We could comfort the landlords with the thought that one-third controlled rent is better than complete rent control. . . .A congressional task force under the chairmanship of Rep. James Jones has found, according to *The Washington Star*'s Leonard Curry, that "the export-import policies of Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea pose as grave a danger to the American economy as the cartel of petroleum exporting nations that has set artificially high world prices since 1973. . . . Asian government policies that allow Asian businesses to sell in the United States but keep the United States out have had the effect of transferring $80 from every American to South Korean, Japanese, and Taiwanese citizens." . . .

A few years ago, the prospect of a "stagflation economy," with high unemployment and high inflation, seemed troubling even to our ruling class. Now, with their incomes adjusted by regular cost-of-living increases, they are insulated again. But if they don't notice the lines of poor people outside the employment office, or the domestic factories being closed down by vigorous foreign competition, they might consider this fact: by 1985 there will be an estimated "surplus" of 950,000 university graduates. So it won't be only the blacks and the poor who have trouble finding jobs; for once, their own sons and daughters may feel the pinch.

That reminds me of one thing that should have been in our Platform for the Eighties. As part of the battle against inflation, "indexing" should be stopped. This is the practice of automatically increasing salaries and pensions when prices rise. It deprives all its beneficiaries of any incentive to fight inflation. . . .Another desirable move against inflation is gas rationing, which was recommended in our July/August 1978 issue. If we limited gasoline consumption for even a year to what we could produce, OPEC

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would be taught a useful lesson.... But, while we do our best to break up the oil cartel, we should also attend to the legitimate emotion behind OPEC, which has a lot to do with our relations with Israel and the Palestinians. The United States should make clear that it supports, and will defend against attack, both Israel and a Palestinian state on the West Bank.

It was a historic moment when Richardson Preyer was defeated by Henry Waxman for chairman of the House health subcommittee. This is the first time a member entitled to a chairmanship has been defeated solely on ideological grounds. What makes it particularly unusual is that no one ever questioned Preyer's competence or fairness. In the past, when a congressman in line for a chairmanship had been turned down, such doubts about his ability or capacity for fairness had always played at least a partial, and sometimes a decisive, role in the decision.... Henry Pace recently retired after 35 years as a member of the staff of former Senator James O. Eastland. When Pace joined the staff, there were but three other people on it and the total payroll for all four was $11,000. When he retired there were 24 working in Eastland's office. But while the staff had grown by six times, its payroll had increased about 50 times to a total of $525,000.... Maybe we should hire some Germans to handle our trade relations with the Japanese. Consider World War II when they were supposed to be allies. As late as September 1944—less than a year before the end of the fighting—the Germans were insisting that Japan pay off a $140-million debt by shipping 50 tons of gold to Germany by submarine. They refused to give the Japanese the plans for the Messerschmitt jet plane unless Japan came across. So while the war was being lost, Japanese submarines were used not to fight, but to transport that gold to Germany. They actually delivered six tons.... Those who worry about the elitist nature of the CIA will not find their anxieties soothed by the recent obituary of its director of personnel. Born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, he graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy, Princeton, and Yale. He died while playing squash at the Metropolitan Club....

Not long ago we complained that there was too much similarity in the views of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Our complaint certainly does not apply to their reporting of Harold Brown's statement of January 25, 1979. The *Times* headline read "Pentagon Chiefs Warn of Soviet Progress in Weapons," and its story, by Bernard Weinraub, began:

"WASHINGTON, JAN. 25—Defense Secretary Harold Brown said today that there was 'an uneasy balance' of military power between the United States and the Soviet Union and that Americans faced major defense and weapons needs over the next few years to meet expanding Soviet strength."

The *Post*'s headline read, "Pentagon Chief Takes Calm View of Soviets," and its story, by George C. Wilson, began:

"The Soviet Union has so many problems, both military and economic, that the United States can safely adopt a 'basically conservative' defense posture, Defense Secretary Harold Brown said yesterday. In one of the calmest appraisals to come out of the Pentagon since the Eisenhower era, Brown cautioned against 'acting as though we were engaged in a terminal arms race,' and instead recommended a carefully paced modernization of American forces."...

The Energy Department rents parking space for its workers at its L'Enfant Plaza office in Washington so that they can drive their cars to work instead of conserving energy by riding the buses and subways that come to the department's door. It also has chauffeured cars that pick up its

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top executives at their homes in the morning and take them home again in the evening. . . . As recently as 1970, the branches of the District of Columbia library were open for 72 hours a week, according to an article by Paula Span in *Washingtonian* magazine. Now they are open 40 hours per week. The main reason is salaries, which go up each time federal employees get a raise, which of course is every year. In the District, a beginning librarian with no experience gets $15,920 a year, compared to $11,387 in nearby Baltimore. The idiocy of this is that there are lots of people who want nice, quiet jobs out of the rain and snow, and would gladly work for lower wages. If we hired them, the libraries could be kept open. . . . A few months ago we wrote about the decline of prejudice against Jews and Catholics since 1960. Here is evidence from *Congressional Quarterly*: In the last two decades the number of Catholics in Congress has grown by one third and the number of Jews has more than doubled. . . .

With their unfunded liability that now exceeds $3 trillion, one could safely say that the federal pension systems require reform. But if reform comes, it will require a legislative miracle, for, as Mike Causey points out, control over the pension programs is split between eleven committees of the House and ten of the Senate. . . . Last month we discussed the fact that most of the violent crimes in this country are committed by people between 15 and 25. The same age group produces most of the violence on our highways. High school driver education courses, instead of helping, are adding to the problem by getting more drivers out on the roads earlier. We should begin to take some steps to remove this hazard from our lives. We could, for example, raise the licensing age to 18, and provide that any moving traffic violation would result in loss of license until the age of 25. The effect of this reform on auto insurance rates is also pleasing to contemplate.

—*Charles Peters*

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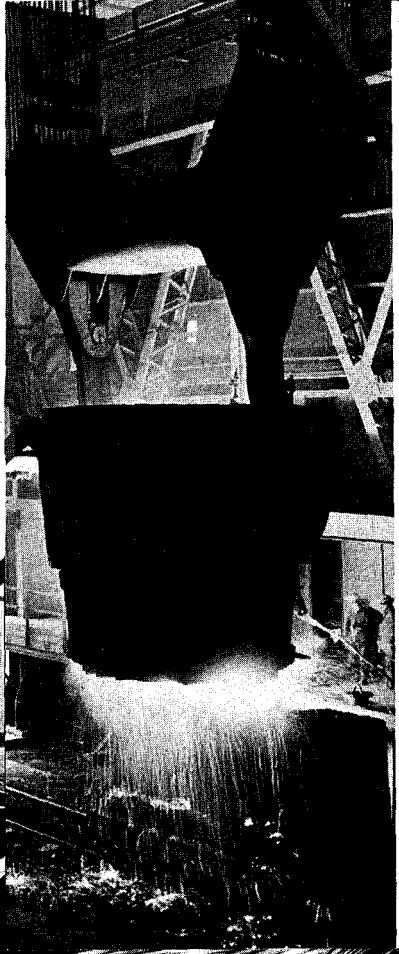
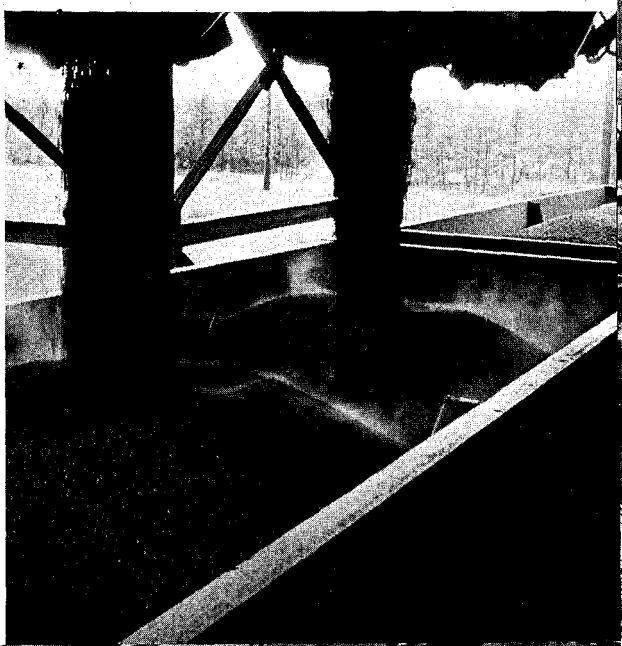
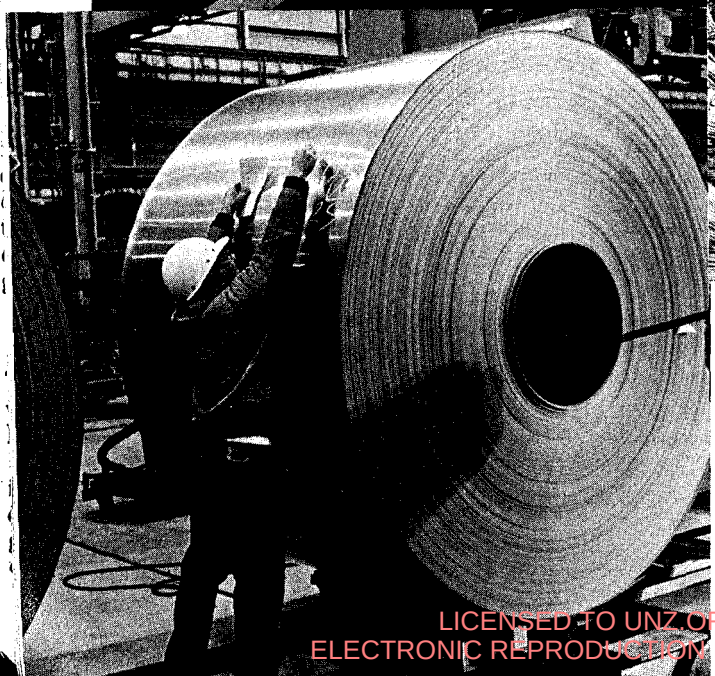
Who Killed the Steel Industry?







by David Ignatius

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When smart people in New York and Washington analyze what's wrong with the American economy, they tend to think about big, complicated things like the money supply, the level of aggregate demand, and the size of the federal budget deficit.

They should take a trip to Pittsburgh.

The problems of the American economy become more comprehensible when you look at a specific industry that is in trouble, like the steel industry. Steel's problems tell us a lot about where we are and how we got there.

To begin to understand what has happened to the American steel industry in the 20th century, it helps to go back to a different time, when America's chief worry seemed to be how best to exploit its abundant natural resources and the everflowing ideas of its entrepreneurs. It's hard, these days, to appreciate how envious the rest of the world was of our economy in that time.

In 1901, a group of British steel executives visited the United States and was awed by the pace of innovation and growth in our steel industry. In 30 years the American industry had changed from an infant, with output only one sixth that of the dominant British, to a giant, whose output was double that of the British industry. During that period of growth, new production techniques had steadily lowered the cost of making steel: the cost of steel rails, for example, had been cut at one of Andrew Carnegie's mills by more than two thirds, to $12 a ton in 1900 from $36.52 a ton in 1878. American exports of steel, meanwhile, were rising, and British home markets were threatened.

The British visitors were struck by the dynamic spirit of American business. Historian David Brody, in his book *Steelworkers in America*, quotes from their report: "The American manufacturer is not so conservative in his methods and ideas." Managers here hadn't had "time to wear themselves into a groove." And in operating their mills and furnaces, the Americans made decisions without regard for "trouble, cost or interference with preconceived ideas and vested interests."

Three quarters of a century later, the American steel industry is politely termed a "mature" industry, with problems the British should easily understand.

Labor costs are enormous and increase much faster than the sluggish growth of productivity. Except for occasional boom years, profits are low, inhibiting investment in new facilities. Where there is innovation, many of the techniques are copied from foreign competitors. And, saddest of all, steel's executives increasingly seem to spend their days either pleading that the government should get off their backs or demanding more government aid.

Meanwhile, American markets are threatened by new steelmasters from across the seas: the Japanese. These days, it's the Americans who return breathless from visits to foreign mills. To take just one example, Peter Marcus, the dean of the Wall Street steel analysts, took a lengthy tour of Japanese steel facilities several years ago. In a subsequent report, he wrote that one Nippon Steel Corporation plant was "the most impressive industrial facility this writer has ever seen."

As their troubles have mounted, American steel executives have tended to blame everyone but themselves. And in defending their embattled industry, they've often shown the sort of conservatism and resistance to creative thinking that the British visitors of 1901 found so remarkably absent from the American industrial landscape.

Most of all, the American steelmen have blamed their foreign rivals. In the classic manner of a beleaguered industry, they've argued that "unfair" trade, rather than hustle and innovation, accounts for the success of their competitors. Indeed, in the last

David Ignatius is a Washington journalist who covered the steel industry while living in Pittsburgh from 1976 to 1978.

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several years, they've spent increasing amounts of their precious revenues on public relations efforts—arguing that steel's difficulties can be solved if only the wretched foreigners will stop "dumping" cheap steel here.

It would be nice if the problem was that simple. Or if, rejecting the industry's trade arguments, we could find another equally simple explanation—like greedy unions, big government, or incompetent management. Unfortunately, what makes the steel industry's story difficult to tell is that there isn't just one villain who's responsible for the mess. Instead, the story is a little like one of those offbeat murder mysteries, where the final pages reveal that every character in the story has had a hand in the crime.

Escape From Competition

The history of the American steel industry is perhaps best understood as a long struggle to escape from competition.

If that sounds odd, bear in mind that competition is the enemy of every good businessman. Competition lowers prices and profits. This obviously benefits consumers, but it increases the businessman's anxiety and insecurity. Thus, any clever businessman hopes to corner the market—by beating back less clever rivals, or by developing a unique product for which there is no competition.

In this way, most of the great American fortunes have been built. Rockefeller exploited bottlenecks in the processing and distribution of petroleum and cornered the oil business. Morgan used concentrated financial power to best his rivals in the banking business. Railroad magnates formed big, prosperous railroads out of small, competing lines.

In the steel industry, the engine of progress was Andrew Carnegie and his struggle to dominate his competitors. In 1893, historian Brody points out, Carnegie decided to get out of a fledgling "pooling agreement" (in effect, a cartel) among companies that produced steel rails. "I do not think anyone can stand in our way," Carnegie wrote. "We needn't hesitate, take orders and run full, there's a margin."

In his drive for monopoly, Carnegie kept economizing and cutting prices. When the market situation required, he even "dumped" steel at prices below his own costs. Inefficient producers were driven out of the steel business, as Carnegie had hoped, and those that remained were forced to match his attention to economy and innovation.

While it created an efficient industry, this sort of cutthroat competition was unpleasant. The recurring price wars made planning and investment decisions difficult for many companies. And the competitive regimen was extended, painfully, to steelworkers, who were often laid off or forced to take sharp pay cuts at the bottom of the economic cycle. In time, even the Carnegie Company began to weary of the Darwinian struggle. Henry Clay Frick, Carnegie's chairman, worried in 1898 that "we cannot get costs down any more."

The retreat came in 1901 with the formation of the United States Steel Corporation. It combined the assets of Carnegie, Federal Steel, Illinois Steel, and other, smaller, producers—and when founded, it controlled well over half of all U.S. steel production.

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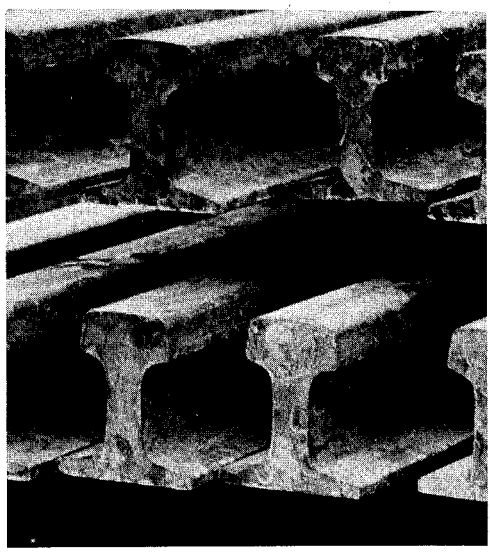
Under the leadership of Judge Elbert Gary, the corporation succeeded in its goal of bringing discipline and price stability to the industry. Judge Gary banished what he viewed as irrational, anarchic competition, and substituted a loftier view of the purposes of business. In 1911, for example, he admonished his subsidiary presidents: "Make it certain your conduct is so high-toned, so fair and reasonable, that you cannot justly be charged with attempting to drive out of business any of your competitors."

Judge Gary placed the steel industry in an exalted position from which it arguably has never recovered. Freed at last from ruthless competition, the industry began its long slide into maturity.

It should be said that the retreat from competition was aided, in a peculiar way, by the antitrust laws. To escape being broken up by the trustbusters, U.S. Steel needed to avoid letting its market share get too large. Thus it was in the corporation's interest not to drive other, less efficient producers out of the market. Except in the worst depressions, this meant holding prices high enough that they covered the least efficient producer's costs and allowed everyone to stay happily in the black. Industrial growth meant that there were enough markets, and profits, for everyone. Any company that pressed for unilateral advantage threatened to upset the applecart. And so, over the years, steel managers inevitably lost the hungry look.

The steel companies were tied together by a market system that has virtually required standardization of products and prices. Steel, after all, isn't a very sexy item. There isn't much you can do to differentiate your I-beam from that of your competitor. And since steel is bought by hard-nosed purchasing agents, rather than soft-hearted consumers, it's tough to use advertising to subtly suggest that the customer will be a more popular guy if he buys your brand. Such marketing campaigns are the great game of



American business, and their relative absence from the steel industry gives steel something of a dull reputation in business circles.

Instead of rock-em, sock-em marketing, or daring pricing policies, the steel industry developed an elaborate system of list prices, which are quoted identically by every major producer. Changes in these list prices can be initiated by a smaller producer, but they won't hold unless they are ratified by U.S. Steel, the so-called "price leader."

The price-setting ritual works something like this: In the weeks before a major change in list prices, steel companies begin telling their customers and the financial press how badly they need a price increase. One company, bemoaning rising costs, will tell reporters that it needs an increase of six per cent in the near future. Other press conferences will follow, at which other companies' executives suggest that a rise of, say, eight per cent or nine per cent is appropriate. Soon one of the smaller companies, unable to restrain itself a moment longer, will actually announce a nine per cent increase. The government will immediately scream that this figure is inflationary—whereupon U.S. Steel, after several days of deliberation, will announce a statesmanlike increase of only six per cent.

This price signalling is as delicate a form of communication as birdsong, and it is part of a tight, almost self-contained industry culture that has developed over decades.

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With so little incentive to clobber the competition, steel executives tended to be operating men, drawn from the ranks of mill superintendents. Generally, they stuck close to the hearth. They weren't going to make any great fortunes in the steel business. But after a lifetime, they knew how to make steel. When pressured by the larger world—of U.S. presidents, journalists, or investors—they often responded with pained resignation, as if they felt like Gulliver, caught helplessly in a web spun by sorry Lilliputians who'd never heard the roar of an oxygen furnace.

Japan Learns How

Into this crystallized corporate world fell the Japanese. With the fanatical determination of Carnegie himself, the Japanese in the years after World War II set about cutting costs and increasing their share of the world steel market. By the 1970s, they had become a giant, capable of providing the first strenuous, sustained price competition the American industry had seen since Judge Gary ended the era of cutthroat rivalry.

From 1950 to 1976, Japanese steel output grew more than 20 times, at an annual growth rate of 14 per cent. (The U.S., in this period, grew at an annual rate of only 1.6 per cent.) And with each new plant the Japanese installed, they improved their steelmaking techniques and productivity. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Japanese reduced the number of manhours needed to produce a ton of steel from 25.2 hours in 1964 to 9.2 hours in 1975. Over that same period, U.S. productivity improved only slightly, from 13.1 hours in 1964 to 10.9 hours in 1975.

Because the Japanese were building new plants so rapidly to serve their expanding markets, they had a chance to pioneer new techniques, like giant blast furnaces. One Japanese company, Nippon Kokan, has built 13 new furnaces since 1945, each with progressively greater capacity and productivity. As of last year, the company's oldest operating furnace dated back to only 1962.

The mature U.S. industry wasn't so lucky. Total domestic U.S. steel demand grew only slightly in the years after 1945, so there wasn't the same spur to build new facilities. Inland Steel, for example (the fifth largest U.S. maker), hadn't built a new blast furnace since World War II. So when the company decided several years ago to install a new "superfurnace" at Indiana Harbor, it retained Nippon Kokan to provide what the Inland company magazine called "Japanese expertise."

Rapid growth had enabled the Japanese to move quickly along what economists like to call a "learning curve"—the same thing had happened, of course, in the formative years of the American industry. For the Japanese, what the learning curve taught was the enormous cost-saving advantage that could be gained from building carefully arranged "integrated" steel plants. Constructing most of their new plants from scratch, the Japanese could craft them as if they were one giant machine—with iron ore, coal, and limestone unloaded from giant ships at one end and finished steel products emerging at the other. These integrated plants could produce steel

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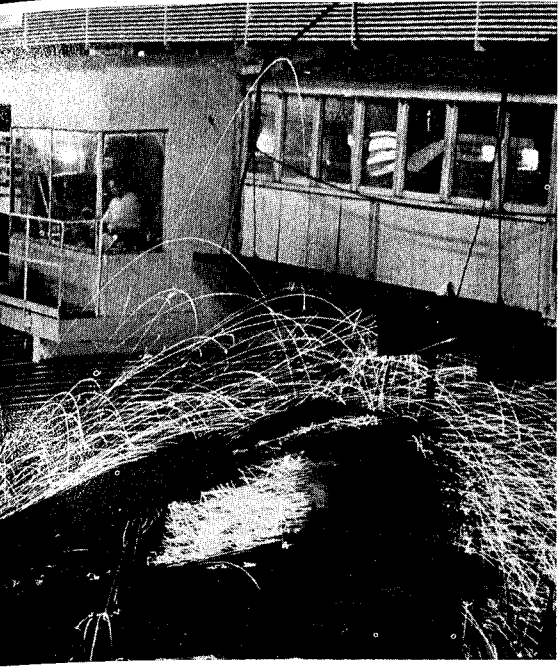

with less labor and with less loss of "yield" during the stages of production. These savings meant lower costs.

In contrast, the "mature" American steel industry didn't have the money, or the immediate need, to construct whole new facilities from the ground up—and this undercut the benefits of whatever new technology the Americans could afford. Once every decade or so, one of the U.S. makers would build an entirely new steelworks, with appropriate fanfare, and it would be nifty. But usually, modern facilities were patched onto existing plants. Individual pieces of American hardware could be every bit as advanced as those of the Japanese, but since they were tied to other, less modern facilities in the same steelworks, the net productivity gain tended to be less.

The American companies were also partly prisoners of Wall Street. Unlike Japanese steelmakers, which are financed mostly by bank debt, and thus don't have to worry about stock-market expectations, the stockholder-owned U.S. makers were expected by Wall Street analysts to present neat, quarter-to-quarter increases in earnings. This limited the ability of American firms to take the risk of exploring new markets to drum up demand or sustaining investment through bad years. It's an unhappy truth that sometimes what is best for a company or an industry—for example, a long period of foregone earnings while the profits are ploughed back into new facilities—is not always what keeps the stockholders happy.

With so many new plants, and with costs that they believed were the lowest in the world, the Japanese adopted Carnegie's sales philosophy: take orders, run the mills full, and charge whatever prices the market will bear. When steel supplies were short, the Japanese would exact a premium from their customers around the world. But when the market was soft, as it was during the last several years, Japanese prices would take a nosedive.

That's the way economic theory says markets are supposed to work. But for American steel companies, with their cozy system of list prices, this sort of behavior was extremely disruptive. As Japanese steel imports increased during 1976 and 1977, the list-price regime began to be undermined by secret discounting by American companies—struggling to meet the low prices quoted by foreign competition.

There's always a bit of discounting in the market. A broker in Chicago, say, will have a friend who manages a sheet-steel mill for one of the local plants. When the mill rolls tonnage that doesn't quite meet the specifications required by the mill's best customers, the manager will call the broker and offer to sell him "seconds" for 15 per cent below list price. During 1977, according to many steel buyers, this sort of practice became so commonplace that there developed a virtual black market in steel, with companies selling prime-quality products as if they were seconds—often at steep discounts. As this practice accelerated, major steelmakers began to report large quarterly losses.

By early 1977, the companies began to sense that they were in the midst of a classic "shakeout," reminiscent of those of the 19th century. And they began to panic—demanding protection from the sort of whirlwind competition in which the American steel industry had been formed. Even

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for the more efficient U.S. companies, the Wall Street factor counseled against a price war with the Japanese. It's often been suggested that if Ed Speers, president of U.S. Steel, really had wanted to beat back the foreign threat, he should simply have filled the holds of a few huge cargo ships with American steel, parked them outside Tokyo harbor, and offered the steel to Japanese buyers at rock-bottom prices. Speer might have been able to do that, but in the process, he would have had to forego more than a few dividends. It's difficult to maintain the tidy profit-and-loss statements investors prefer while meeting the competition in a roller-coaster market. So, for most of the industry, government intervention against the imports seemed the more comfortable solution.

But even as the companies were moaning about imports, the shakeout was doing its brutal work. Inefficient plants, and entire companies, were being swept out of the market. Alan Wood Steel, the nation's oldest producer, closed its doors in the summer of 1977. Several months later, Bethlehem Steel closed much of its Johnstown Works in Pennsylvania and then portions of its Lackawanna Works near Buffalo. Finally, in September, Youngstown Sheet and Tube closed its Campbell Works in Youngstown, laying off nearly 5,000 workers. The Steel Crisis was in full swing.

What wasn't often reported, as government officials in Washington scrambled to help bail out the industry, was that the plants being closed were among the least efficient and highest-cost in the industry; and that the shakeout precipitated by the Japanese was forcing American companies to make tough management decisions they had been avoiding for decades.

A few brave souls, like Lewis Foy, chairman of Bethlehem Steel, seemed to understand that for all the anguish that accompanied the plant closings, the harsh decisions taken in 1977 were making for a stronger steel industry that would be better able to compete with the Japanese over the long run. But that was a faint note against the escalating chorus of demands from the industry for import protection.

Even as big an industrial lobby as the steelmakers, however, couldn't count on obtaining help from the government by themselves. They needed an ally—which brings us to the second villain in the steel story, the steelworkers' union.

The Union Joins the Fight

The central understanding between the American steel industry and the United Steelworkers of America was set forth in a document called the "Experimental Negotiating Agreement" (ENA), signed in 1973. The industry, in effect, pledged that it would maintain the extraordinarily high level of wages for steelworkers, in return for the union's pledge not to strike nationwide, and for its implied promise to help the industry lobby for protection from foreign competition.

The no-strike agreement completed the web of interdependence that had been gathering around the industry and the union for more than a decade. And in a sense, it was the product of the joint battle against imports.

There had not been a nationwide steel strike since 1959. Yet every three years, as the collective-bargaining agreement came up for renegotiation, steel buyers became so nervous about the possibility of a walkout that they

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stockpiled huge inventories—buying steel from whomever would sell it, including foreign mills. In this way, American steel buyers established relationships with foreign steelmakers and learned that, for the most part, they offered high-quality products. In the process, American steel companies lost customers and American steelworkers lost jobs.

The alternative to the ENA agreement would have been for the industry to become tight-fisted at the bargaining table and take a long strike, in the hope of winning a settlement that would cut the rate of increase in labor costs. That would have been costly, and risked further losses to imports. Instead, the industry agreed to guaranteed wage increases and other goodies that, over the life of the three-year contract negotiated in 1974, dramatically increased steel's average hourly labor costs by about 50 per cent. For its part, the union agreed to the symbolic emasculation of the no-strike pledge, which calmed down the nervous buyers. Both sides, implicitly, recognized that they needed each other's help to maintain this amiable arrangement, for without protection from foreign competition, their web of interdependence might collapse.

The ENA was the sort of collective bargaining "breakthrough" that sends labor-relations professionals into ecstasies of exegesis. I.W. Abel, the union's white-haired president, was hailed as a labor statesman by outside commentators. But he was less successful in selling his policies to his own rank and file, and, four years later when he retired, he left a bitterly divided union.

Abel's retirement ceremony was held June 1, 1977, at the southwestern Pennsylvania estate of an old industrialist, which the union had recently purchased. It was a peculiar day. Abel appeared to be drunk, and in his remarks, he needlessly insulted the union's vice president, John Johns, who was also retiring. At a beer and sausage party after the ceremony, the local union presidents who had come to say farewell to Abe seemed more interested in grabbing handfuls of the large pewter plates that were being given away as souvenirs. A local union president from Gary, who had managed to gather a half dozen of the pewter plates, remarked on the way back to Pittsburgh that it was odd, given all that Abel had done for the union, that he seemed to be leaving office unloved.

What had happened to Abel was that he had become a victim of the union's prosperity and success. Like other labor leaders of his generation, he had struggled to build a stable union bureaucracy and win bread and butter gains for the membership. The ENA was only another step along this road.

But Abel's bureaucracy got the scare of its life in 1977, when a flamboyant challenger named Ed Sadlowski ran for union president on a platform denouncing the no-strike agreement and most of the rest of the Abel legacy. Sadlowski couldn't promise the well-paid workers more money, but he offered something else: an appeal to old-fashioned labor solidarity and sentiment. He cursed and drank beer and loved to sing old labor songs. And he carried a majority of the members in the well-paid steel locals. The pro-Abel candidate, Lloyd McBride, managed to win only by running up substantial margins in the dingy, non-steel outposts of the union—like the machine tool industry, the container industry, and the steel-fabricating industry—where prosperity and its discontents were less obvious.

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What made the union's troubles interesting was that by 1977 they stood in the way of what might have been a genuine collective-bargaining breakthrough—one that could have put the steel industry and its workers on a more stable financial footing for decades.

The management of U.S. Steel went into the 1977 contract negotiations prepared to offer permanent job security for the industry's current employees, in exchange for a free hand in using them in the most productive way. It was buy-out proposal, like those that have been reached in the newspaper business and other industries where new technology has made many crafts obsolete. U.S. Steel's bargainers recognized that if the industry was to use modern facilities to best advantage, it would need more flexibility. But such flexibility was impossible without union agreement to overhaul the existing thicket of benefit plans, craft jurisdictions, and manning-level agreements. Privately, even union officials would concede that, in many mills, electricians, millwrights, and other craftsmen sometimes spent half the day sleeping or playing cards because they couldn't be assigned work outside a particular jurisdiction.

Abel appeared willing to cut the sort of deal that would trade job security for flexibility in work assignments. But the negotiations were being conducted in the shadow of the divisive Sadlowski election, and, by the closing days, it was clear that such an innovative bargain was out of the question. With a majority of the members in the steel industry agreeing with Sadlowski that Abel was already in bed with management, the union couldn't appear to be giving up any of its existing rights—even if they amounted to featherbedding. The same union officials who privately admitted that featherbedding was widespread insisted in public that there could be no "tradeoffs" to management in the 1977 settlement.

In the long run, of course, the union would be the loser for this sort of resistance to innovation and change. Over time, the price of American steel would increase, and markets would be lost to foreign producers or to substitute materials like aluminum or plastic. As a result, American mills would close, and jobs would be eliminated.

As it happened, the union didn't have to wait long for a glimpse of its future. Four months after the new contract—shorn of the productivity tradeoffs—was signed, the wave of plant closings began. At that point, all the union could do was lend its muscle to the industry campaign for protection from imports.

Nobody's Job

The final accomplice in the demise of the steel industry has been the federal government, and its role is especially disturbing. We tend to expect shortsightedness and self-interest on the part of private groups, like businessmen or trade unions. But we have a right to expect something better from the government.

The simple truth is that if the steel industry had been as badly managed as the federal government's policies toward it, it would have disappeared long ago.

In its dealings with the industry, the government has behaved like the worst sort of monopolist: remote, arbitrary, and inefficient. Even as steel's problems worsened, the various components of the federal establishment clung to their separate bureaucratic imperatives—unplanned and, for the most part, uncomprehending.

By the 1970s, the federal government had a hand in virtually every aspect of the industry. Steel prices were set through informal negotiations with the anti-inflation bureaucracy. Investment decisions were determined partly by federal tax policies and partly by commands from the anti-pollution bureaucracy. Trade policy fixed the level of foreign competition. Antitrust

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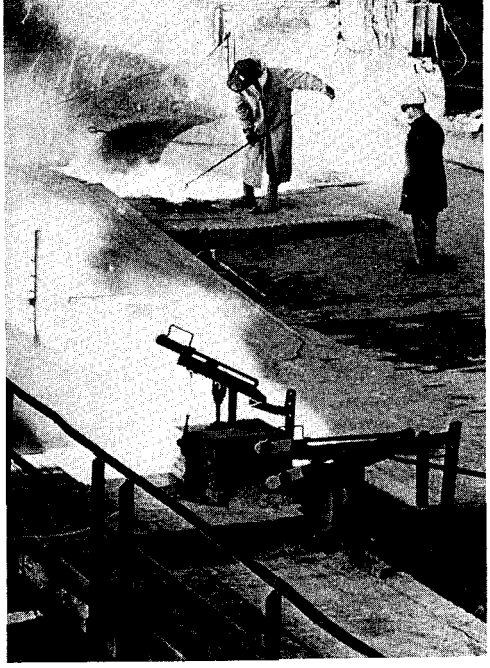
policy determined who could merge with whom.

For the most part, the various bureaucracies were too busy tilling their own gardens to worry very much about the overall health of the industry. That wasn't anybody's job, really. The EPA had to oversee steel's compliance with clean air and clean water standards. The Labor Department had its hands full with safety and health issues in the mills. The Treasury Department had to worry about steel-trade relations with the Japanese and depreciation schedules for blast furnaces. When the bureaucracies dealt with the steel industry, it was in the narrow terms of these regulatory responsibilities.



The limited—and often conflicting—purposes of the various government bodies is clearest in matters that involve technical issues. Here, the debate between the experts of a given bureaucracy, and the experts of the industry, is largely incomprehensible to anyone with a broader perspective.

Take the issue of depreciation charges for capital equipment. Steel-industry economists argue, persuasively, that the incentive to invest in new steelmaking equipment is limited by the Internal Revenue Service requirement that it be written off over an 18-year period. If the depreciation life of mill equipment were shortened, they argue, there would be less reason for steel companies to keep existing facilities in operation when more modern techniques are available.

The IRS offers all sorts of technical rebuttals, but they boil down to an argument that if depreciation rules were changed for steel, they would have to be changed for *everybody*. Which would be a nuisance.

What the IRS bureaucrats ignore is the possibility that steel may, indeed, be a special case, deserving a special examination. But then, the IRS' job is to worry about the integrity of the tax code, not the future of the steel industry.

At the EPA, the focus is similarly single-minded. Pollution standards have been developed as if little else in the world mattered. In the process, EPA rules have virtually guaranteed chronic unemployment in old mill towns. First, they have decreed that old plants and new ones must meet similar rules on emissions. This means extensive retrofitting of old plants, and not all of them are worth the expense. They may have a few good years left, but not enough to justify spending many millions for brand-new scrubbers and water-emission systems. So the steel companies have dragged their feet, fighting the rules in court. When they finally lose, they often simply close the facilities. The EPA's edicts led residents of the Mahoning Valley in Ohio to complain that the agency cared more about fish than about steelworkers.

Compounding the problem for old mill towns are other EPA rules that have encouraged building new plants in areas with low pollution levels. This sounds like a good idea, except that it limits the ability of companies to add facilities, and jobs, in declining industrial areas—with already high pollution—where they may be most needed. EPA's rules encourage companies to build elsewhere; then other state and federal agencies have to fork over billions for job training, unemployment compensation and the like.

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In each area where the bureaucracy got involved in steelmaking, there was good reason for the government to be concerned with the industry's behavior. The tragedy was that no one in Washington took the trouble to coordinate these regulatory activities in a way that would insure that the country maintained a healthy, competitive steel industry. Washington regulated while Pittsburgh burned.

Part of the problem stemmed from what might be called the "New Deal stalemate." The 1930s had established the principle that the government has a right to meddle wherever it wants. But the New Deal stopped short of creating the sort of national economic-planning apparatus that could coordinate the buzzing swarm of regulators. Business and labor—not without reason afraid of arbitrary, socialistic power—seemed to prefer meddling to planning.

The stalemate yielded a legalistic, adversary relationship between business and the government. Individual agencies were established whose function was not to view business as a potential source of wealth and creativity for the nation, but as a behemoth to be circumscribed at a particular point—as a polluter, as a taxpayer, as an employer. Business, often enough, learned to play along with this system—wherever possible by the simple expedient of "capturing" the agencies who were its ostensible adversaries. But where the adversaries remained true adversaries—as is the case with the EPA—business too learned to play the adversary role, grabbing for every advantage, blocking the regulators with legal maneuvering and threats.

Lawyers, of course, could applaud such a relationship. In their view, the combat of business and government produced—in a marvelous synthetic moment understood only by lawyers—outcomes that served "the public interest." And, as long as the economy was expansive and abundant, nobody bothered to question whether the adversary system was actually the best way to serve the common interests that depended on key industries like steel.

The idea that the proper relationship between business and government is one of constant combat has, however, been a distinctly American notion. In part, that probably reflects the fact that we've never had the experience of a centralized government that linked, at gunpoint, the resources of the state with those of industry. In countries that have had this sort of government—such as Germany, France, or Japan—a process of national economic planning quite easily emerged as an alternative to an adversarial system.

In Japan, for example, the elite Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) has developed target levels of growth and investment for steel and other basic industries. A few big banks, working with the MITI technocrats, allocate capital according to the plan. Since there aren't any stockholders to get in the way of the corporate managers, companies can go through lean years without getting frantic about quarterly earnings or dividend payments. And, when times are really tough, workers have happily foregone pay increases. With everyone moving in the same direction, toward productivity and growth, Japanese industry can function with the efficiency of an anthill.

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To Americans, this image of "Japan, Inc." is both fascinating, and repelling. We've never been a totalitarian country, and, we feel, this is not the moment to start. But, at the same time, it seems equally obvious that in our economic sphere, the adversary system just isn't working.

The dangers of the system were revealed in the unfolding of the Steel Crisis of 1979. As aging mills closed and thousands of steelworkers lost their jobs, the union joined with the industry in pressuring the government to do something to stop the import tide. Suddenly, the government was confronted with a decision that would affect the development of the steel industry for years to come. What response was best for the nation? The crisis posed precisely the sort of broad question that had fallen between the desks of the federal regulators over the years.

Had the government—and the press, and the public—been used to thinking in national terms about the health of the steel industry, it might have been easier to resist the demands of the companies and the union for trade protection. Instead, the Carter administration chose the course that would keep its most vocal constituents happy. The "adversary relationship" gave way to an alliance—but an alliance in which the government all too quickly accepted the industry's and union's definition of the problem.

The administration's chosen instrument of relief was a bizarre device known as "trigger prices." Government economists undertook to calculate what it should cost to produce steel in Japan: they then decreed that they would investigate, and penalize, anyone caught importing steel into the U.S. at prices below Japanese costs.

It was a comical situation: hordes of statisticians puzzling over Japanese production figures, converting them from metric tons to net tons and back again; adjusting for yield variations and product-mix variations, and God knows what else; industry executives, all the while, denouncing the bureaucrats for ignoring the crucial "contract-labor" variations. In the end, after all the calculating, the "trigger prices" bore a remarkable resemblance to U.S. list prices. And government officials conceded privately that they had established what amounted to a cartel arrangement for world steel.

The scheme did succeed in cooling the Steel Crisis. The wave of plant closings ended; with list prices underwritten by the government, industry profits recovered sharply in 1978 from the depressed levels of 1977.

But trigger prices, in the end, seemed to have added another chapter to the saga of the steel industry's escape from competition. The decision to restrict imports kept several inefficient U.S. plants in operation, and it saved the jobs of the workers in those plants. It paid for this protection by making consumers pay a tax, in the form of higher steel prices.

But, most of all, it allowed the industry, the union, and the government to postpone a real reckoning with steel's problems. Executives could continue to badmouth big government and dispense pieties about the free market, even as the government's policies were blunting the intense market competition that might bring about a leaner, more efficient industry. Union leaders could postpone the date when they might have to change the inflexible rules that prevented the productive use of labor in the mills. Nor would they have to restrain their own wage demands, which have caused steel's labor costs to rise faster than labor costs in nearly every other industry. Finally, government could avoid facing up to the need to coordinate its own confusing policies.

To solve the steel industry's problems, the companies, the union, and the government have to grow up. Steel's decline suggests that we can't afford the New Deal stalemate—and its drain on productivity and innovation in our basic industries—very much longer. ■

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Memo of the Month

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 9, 1979

MEMORANDUM TO ALL ASSISTANT SECRETARIES AND OFFICE HEADS

SUBJECT: Instructions Regarding Proper Terminology for Referring to China, People's Republic of China, China Mainland and Taiwan in Official Statements and Publications

With the recognition of the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate government of China and with the severance of diplomatic relations with the authorities on Taiwan, guidelines are necessary to insure that all U.S. Government official statements and publications concerning Taiwan conform to our policy.

Accordingly, on and after January 1, 1979, U.S. Government departments and agencies should follow the guidelines listed below in referring to China, People's Republic of China, China mainland, and Taiwan in official statements and publications:

1) The term "Republic of China" is not to be used in referring to Taiwan.

2) The adjectival form is "Taiwan," not "Taiwanese." People should be referred to as "from Taiwan," "on Taiwan," "of Taiwan," etc., rather than as Taiwanese. The adjective "Chinese" should not be applied to the government or institutions on Taiwan. (The ethnic groups on Taiwan are, however, Chinese; the language spoken there is Chinese, and one of its dialects is Taiwanese. These terms should continue to be used in appropriate instances.)

3) The People's Republic of China has adopted its own method for romanizing Chinese names ("pinyin"), which is preferable for persons from the PRC and PRC placenames.

4) The Wade-Giles system, long in general use for transliterating Chinese into English, should be used for personal and place names relating to Taiwan and for other Chinese names, except where local or personal variations have been customary in places like Singapore and Hong Kong.

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5) Tables of economic statistics, indexes, and similar materials, should put "China" (not "People's Republic of China") in its appropriate alphabetical position, followed by "mainland," and then "Taiwan," each indented and printed in italics or other distinctive type-face. Where statistics or other tabulated material appear in such lists, separate totals should be provided for "mainland" and "Taiwan." No grand total for "China" should be given. Where information on China is provided on a province-by-province basis, Taiwan should not be listed alphabetically among the provinces, but should be set off separately after the alphabetical list of provincial names. Again, statistics should be totalled separately, for "mainland" and for "Taiwan."

6) Where non-statistical information is given on both the China mainland and Taiwan (e.g., in country directories and similar publications), information on the Chinese mainland should be placed under "China" (not "People's Republic of China"), and information on Taiwan should be placed under a "Taiwan" heading. "China" should be asterisked and the reader referred to "Taiwan," which should be listed separately at the close of the list of countries. Under no circumstances should "Taiwan" be placed or footnoted under "China" or the "People's Republic of China."

7) There are cases, of course, where "People's Republic of China" may be appropriate usage. Special guidance has been and will continue to be provided for such cases (e.g. FBIS "Green Book"). If any agencies have publications which they believe should use the term "People's Republic of China," they should make a recommendation to the Department of State, as below.

8) Any questions should be addressed to the China Working Group, Room 1210-A, Department of State (632-4830 or 632-3928).

Frank G. Wisner for
Peter Tarnoff
Executive Secretary

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What's Wrong With Roots

by Robert M. Kaus

I was raised in Beverly Hills, California—and like most of the kids in that sunny suburb, I am Jewish. Jewish enough, at any rate, for Hitler to have chased my parents into the New World. But not, I'm sometimes told, obviously Jewish on the surface. For this reason, I've often had the experience of having my ethnic identity "discovered." "Oh, you're Jewish," someone will exclaim, and I am immediately put on guard—because that phrase usually means one of two things. Sometimes the implication is "well, that explains a lot," and I can only wonder what deep and specious connections are being made in the mind of my observer. Or else I'm discovered by somebody who is also Jewish, in which case the revelation is often followed by a knowing look, a sort of wink. "We have a lot in common," the look seems to say, invoking a tradition of culture and philosophy that I am assumed to share like a bond. These are the most awkward moments of all, because where I should feel the throb of ethnic fervor, I inevitably feel nothing.

Beverly Hills, I suspect, was not the best place in the world to cultivate a fine Jewish consciousness. There, in one of the world's most pleasant climates, enjoying a life of almost unprecedented wealth, it was difficult to work up the sense of persecution and torment that, I am told, is central to the experience of my race. The wonderful aspects of Jewish culture—the emphasis on learning and humor, the hustle, the kind and inevitable paternalism—were either overwhelmed by the materialism of the community, or else seemed to have become part of the larger Southern California world that surrounded us, and appeared on our television screens. Either way, the attempts of my neighbors to preserve their Jewishness by traditional means—attending temple, staying away from school on Rosh Hashanah, or shipping off to far-away kibbutzes—often seemed artificial. I was, of course, well schooled in the horror of the Holocaust; but to me that horror was not so much the attempted annihilation of a culture as the arbitrary murder of individuals on the basis of discovered ancestry. In short, I was a non-ethnic.

In 1971, Michael Novak announced the "Decade of the Ethnics," and maybe sometime in the intervening years I should have made a major effort to acquaint myself with my own cultural heritage, visited my ancestral town perhaps, tracked down distant relatives, or read some of the fine histories of the Jewish diaspora. If I fancied myself a leftist, I could have steeped myself in the history of the Jewish Left, read all the McCarthy hearings, learned the old songs, wandered around mumbling about the Rosenbergs. I tried a few of these things, but they didn't seem to work. Reading the enthusiastic confessionals of born-again ethnics, I could tell I was being left behind, feel the subtle contempt that those who are at one with their heritage must have for the assimilated. In their eyes, I was bland, suburban. I was trying to be a WASP.

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Then, I decided I shouldn't feel uncomfortable about who I am. If I'm not interested in Judaism, if I have no hidden ethnic yearnings to satisfy, so be it. I guess you could say I've rediscovered my assimilation.

The Ethnic Prescription

In the early 70's, when the "New Ethnicity," according to Novak, "blazed up... before public eyes," its champions were motivated by some reasonable and urgent concerns. It had become a bad habit among the liberal elite—in the wake of the civil rights movement and the Kerner Commission—to look with contempt upon the white working class sons of Polish, Italian, Greek, and Slavic immigrants, labeling them as "racist" or "obstacles to social progress." The ethnic intellectuals, Novak, Rev. Andrew Greeley, Msgr. Geno Baroni, among others, perceived a healthy dose of class snobbery and "nativist" prejudice in these attitudes, as well as an easy lack of empathy. Taking their cue from the civil rights struggle itself, they—and ethnic organizers like Stephen Adubado of Newark and Barbara Mikulski of Baltimore—sought to restore the pride that might allow working class whites and blacks to treat each other as respected equals. It is difficult to argue with their initial political impulse.

But their movement, particularly as interpreted by Novak and Greeley, had a broader, cultural thrust, which was an attack on the old ideal of the "melting pot." Not only hadn't the melting pot worked, said the New Ethnicists, but it shouldn't. Novak railed against the predominance of the "WASP superculture"—rational, restrained, competitive, above all "solitary," and ultimately "sterile." Assimilation in America meant joining this superculture, and the result was both a loss of community and a numbing conformity. "The melting pot," wrote Novak, "is a kind of homogenized soup."

As a cure for WASPish homogenization, the New Ethnicity prescribed a particular type of pluralism—a pluralism based on the traditional cultures of America's immigrant groups. The alternatives were rather starkly set forth: either we would follow the ethnic prescription and pursue what Greeley called "a mosaic society in which at least the most intimate ties are sought and maintained within our ethnic or religio-ethnic groups," or we would end up with the monotony of isolating competition.

Over the ensuing decade, the ethnic crusade did have a highly visible impact. Millions of Americans "rediscovered their roots." Pan Am commercials came to feature photographs of Poles, Asians, and Germans. "Good-sized paperback bookstores have shelves lined with books on ethnicity," Father Greeley proudly points out, while "courses of ethnic studies have spread like contagious diseases through college catalogues...." Chambers of commerce "have busily compiled lists of the 'ethnic' restaurants, including many that didn't know they were ethnic...."

But the ethnic movement was supposed to be more than this orgy of genealogy, scholarship, and cuisine. It was supposed to be, in Novak's words, "a barrier against alienation and anomie," a vehicle for preserving a sense of communality in a society dominated by "the bitch goddess success and the pursuit of loneliness." Yet are we less dominated by those qualities after our ethnic revival, or more? Despite its popularity, the ethnic prescription has proved to be a good bit less effective than Novak advertised, and the "Decade of the Ethnics" probably ranks with the "Greening of America" in terms of living up to its advance notices.

Unmelting the Melted

The weaknesses of the movement, like those of Reich's "counterculture,"

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should have been apparent from the start. First of all, there was a basic ambiguity about whom the New Ethnicists were talking about. "It is very difficult," Father Greeley wrote in 1971, "to speak precisely about what an ethnic group is. . . . Does everyone belong to an ethnic group? . . . Such questions do not admit of quick answers." In the heady days of the ethnic movement's birth, however, quick answers weren't required; the fuzziness of the revival's key concept, rather than calling the enterprise into question, only seemed to show how badly it was needed. The inability to "accurately identify the boundaries of the ethnic population," complained one New Ethnician, "reveals how indifferent much of the traditional social sciences have been towards the study of white ethnic Americans."

At times, the constituency of the New Ethnicity was clearly those white immigrants whom the melting pot hadn't melted. In describing these "unmeltable ethnics," Novak refers repeatedly to the "primordial," ineradicable quality of ethnic character. "Emotional patterns that have been operative for a thousand years do not cease to function," he argues. Although the exact mechanism is never specified (is ethnicity inherited, or simply drummed into the brains of youth?), our "instincts, judgments, and sense of reality are heirs to cultural experiences that are now largely unconscious."

The problem with the "unmeltable" view of ethnicity is people like me, members of what Novak and others like to call a "new class"—mobile, rootless, salaried, fond of universal moralizing and "social change." On all these counts I plead "no contest,"—but so what? For good or evil, there are a whole lot of people like me floating around, thoroughly assimilated, or hopelessly polyglot, with "primordial" ties of "blood," "family," and "land" confounded by decades of intermarriage. The melting pot may not have softened up our grandparents or parents, but it has done its work on us. Even the most optimistic champions of white ethnicity claimed a constituency of less than 20 per cent of the American population.

If ethnicity was to be the basis for a nationwide rebirth of community, as men like Novak envisioned, the movement would clearly have to do more than organize existing ethnic groups. It would have to expand them—not by new immigration, but by a rediscovery of ethnicity among already "melted" Americans. So there is an exhortation running through the writings of the ethnic revivalists, directed at the assimilated: cultivate your ethnic character, search your past for, in Novak's phrase, "ethnic materials," "discover" your inherit-

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ance. Ethnicity, rather than being ineradicable, became, "in part, a matter of choice."

But if becoming ethnic is a matter of choice, should we make that choice? In answering that question, the ethnic revivalists quickly ran up against a paradox. For, although the main goal of ethnic pluralism is to encourage variety in society as a whole, in order to achieve that end it must *discourage* the cultivation of variety *within* individuals. If an individual adopts the values of a number of different ethnic groups, his identity is split between those cultures; communal bonds are fragmented and diffused, and the dread assimilation looms just around the corner. The connoisseur of ethnicity ceases to be an ethnic himself.

As a result, the New Ethnicists find themselves, in the name of social contrast, endorsing what Jimmy Carter once so infelicitously called "ethnic purity." The preservation of ethnic heritage degenerates easily into a cult of authenticity. So, for all their talk of "richness," "complexity," and "untidy, messy, diversity," you won't catch Novak or Greeley talking about a variety of ethnic strands coexisting peacefully within the character of a single human being. Instead, Novak's writings are littered with attempts to explain his near-mystical belief that, even in the most confused mongrel, one strain will out. "It is amazing," he

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argues, "how persons who claim themselves to have a 'very mixed' ethnic background exhibit patterns of taste and appreciation that are very ethnic indeed: a delight in the self-restraint of Scotsmen, discomfort with the effusiveness of Sicilians—or, by contrast, a sense of release in encountering Sicilian emotions, a constriction of nervousness faced with the puzzling cues of the culture of the Scots." Our mission, Novak implies, is to search for this single ethnic clue that "unlocks secrets of the psyche as no other does."

And what if you sometimes emulate the restraint of the Scots, sometimes the Sicilian effusion? What if you are the offspring of a Scottish-Sicilian liaison, and are neither effusive nor reserved—and what's worse, you've developed a strong taste for knackwurst? Well, boy are you out of it. You're just not authentically anything, and you'd better rediscover your true ethnic identity before your self-confidence is undermined entirely. To become an "unmeltable ethnic," it seems, one must be made of only one metal.

Ultimately, the process by which those of mixed background or taste cultivate a single ethnic character is hopelessly artificial. "Given a grandparent or two," Novak tells us, "one chooses to shape one's consciousness by one history or the other." I am supposed to comb my family tree for its various ethnic fruits. After shopping at this ancestral smorgasbord, I pick the flavor I prefer, and then I dine on nothing else. Why? Why aren't I exactly who I am, the product of a variety of cultures, for whom a whiff of L.A. smog yields far more authentic nostalgia than a trip to the Holy Land?

Even for those of unblemished ethnic lineage, the demands of authenticity can seem arbitrary. Is it inevitable that people be, as Novak predicts, "pleased to discover the limits inherent in being who they are?" A more appealing ideal would leave even the ethnically pure free to pick those aspects of their inheritance that they want to cherish, and to supplement them with habits from elsewhere.

Indeed, for the entire society, the celebration of ethnic difference encourages a crippling sort of relativism. After all, if you are going to avoid imposing your own "super-culture," you must try to appreciate other traditions "warts and all." If Italians have a history of idealizing and subordinating women—well, that's Italian for you! If, as a child of the professional suburbs, you've tried to play basketball with black ghetto teenagers more intent on proving their manhood than playing the game, your misgivings about the role of machismo in black culture should be repressed. We can thank feminism, and the civil rights movement, for cutting through ethnic boosterism to subject the culture of whatever group to a scrutiny based on some universal ideas of justice.

Perhaps because most people, at bottom, are reluctant to leave important decisions to the whim of inheritance, the efforts of "new class" professionals to rediscover their roots often mock the very communality that the ethnic movement was supposed to preserve. A good example is Paul Cowan's account, in his recent book, *The Tribes of America*, of his attempts to recover his own Jewish past, to "organize part of my life around that rich heritage." Cowan starts by talking to Orthodox Jews. He soon takes up fasting on Yom Kippur. He is "delighted" to find a distant rabbi in his family tree. Though he wears a yarmulke on his trips to the Lower East Side ("I told myself I was doing so as a sign of respect. But. . . wearing it was. . . but a way of reclaiming part of my identity"), he wrestles with himself about whether to remove it as he nears his uptown apartment (he does). He ends by describing his, and his wife's, attempts to "figure out how to observe the Sabbath, but in a way that blended the realities of our own highly mobile, multicultured life with our desire for peace and ceremony."

What's missing from Cowan's description of his New Ethnic lifestyle,

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of course, is any appreciation for all but the most superficial or noncontroversial aspects of the Orthodox tradition. We don't even know if Cowan believes in God. Everything is peace, tradition, heritage—conferred by the symbols of a past, rather than any commitment to the substance those symbols represent. In Cowan's hands, ethnicity is reduced to the level of interior decorating; he has just done up his life in Early Jewish.

No Grounds for Dreaming

Of course, not everyone who rediscovers their "roots" gets as carried away with the mechanics of the process as Cowan. And, symbols of continuity, as well as knowledge of our families' histories, are important to all of us. But those symbols aren't always "ethnic" symbols; those family pasts are often gloriously mixed; and neither can substitute for our constant, individual efforts to make our own judgments. When the New Ethnicists billed their movement as the key to transforming American society, they violated these limits on the role of immigrant cultures in our lives. They also ignored the limitations that would be created by the ethnic revival itself.

In his book, *The Rise of the Ummeltable Ethnics*, Michael Novak described all the wonderful results that might flow from a rebirth of "ethnic consciousness." He dreamed, he said, of a day when something would be "done to decentralize industry, to weave work more naturally into the rhythms of the home," when "the formation of workers' caucuses" would "devise ways of humanizing their work," when "industrial establishments would be required to put a certain percentage of their income into enhancing the total environment of family and leisure." These are inspiring goals. But they are inspiring, in part, because they would build intimacy and community into our central institutions of work, rather than relying on the ethnic ornaments that adorn the fringes of life.

More important, for any of Novak's dreams to come true there would first have to be a tremendous effort to conceive and realize the interests of the entire nation. What are the chances that ethnic clans could be the basis for such a united effort? Isn't it more likely that, if our identities are tied to our particular ancestral groups, we will be encouraged to look after only the particular interests of those groups, to preserve their accustomed privileges, rather than risk them in a general effort to satisfy an overriding *national* interest? After all, even the ability of ethnic groups to respect each other—rather than hate each other—requires a healthy dose of "superculture," because the ideal of tolerance must be taught to all. The sort of society-wide agreement that might move us toward Novak's decentralized utopia would itself amount to a new national culture.

Send More Chuck Berry

At different points in our history, different approaches, and emphases, seem appropriate. For the waves of immigrants who arrived in this country, the preservation of traditional communities was often a vital means of countering the contempt of predecessors, the pain of dislocation, and the burden of economic discrimination. Similarly, men like Novak were right, at the beginning of this decade, to point out the condescending attitudes of many liberal professionals toward "white ethnics," and to decry the active repression of immigrant cultures.

But these moments have come and, largely, gone. For many Americans, like myself, the substance of the immigrant values has been lost. Whether the mechanism was WASP repression or free choice doesn't seem to matter much now—only an impoverished and confining vision would condemn us to exhume our particular ethnic legacies rather than

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build on our new knowledge and experience.

And the noble goals of the New Ethnicity, the restoration of community, the fight against a culture that Novak describes as "sterile for the emotions, the instincts, the imagination," require that we all struggle together to establish new communities, habits, and traditions, to choose the best elements from our ethnic inheritances and forge them into a common identity. An obsession with those separate pasts can only cloud our judgment, and blunt our creativity. We need the ability of each generation to say "My parents were like that. I am going to be different."

The message of the ethnic ideologues is that any common identity must be that of the "WASP superculture," that assimilation means homogenization. But in this they ignore a great deal of American experience. There are events, pieces of our history, which seem to go beyond mere tolerance, or

The View From Providence

For someone like me, whose surname ends in a vowel, Providence, R.I., was a nice place to be born and raised. It is, like a lot of east coast cities, a town where ethnic consciousness runs high, and where one of the dominant values is a belief in the virtues of sticking by one's own kind, whether that means family, neighborhood, or, in a larger context, ethnic group. High school status, I remember, was often conferred on the basis of what ethnic group one belonged to, and what neighborhood one lived in (the "tougher" the neighborhood, the higher the status).

In the parts of Providence where I grew up, the predominant ethnic group was the Italians, so it was natural that I embraced that part of my heritage. My father is the son of an Italian immigrant, and although I know less about where my grandfather came from and how he got to America than I would like, I have always found the notion of his getting here a romantic and attractive one. In doing so, I undoubtedly slighted my mother's heritage, which was mostly Irish, but that was of no great concern to me at the time; in Providence there was a great deal of pride associated with being Italian, and as a kid with an Italian surname, it was not something I was about to miss out on.

Away from the peer pressure of those days, I have since come to see myself quite a bit differently. Like Kaus, I consider myself a non-ethnic. In saying this, I have no sense that I am rejecting my heritage in order to better blend in with any homogenized mass of white-collar Americans. I am, however, making some distinctions: my past comes out of Rhode Island and America, not Italy, and if I take a certain pride in the accomplishments of my grandfather, or in knowing there is a town in Italy called Nocera (which, without any particular grounding in fact, I have always assumed had something to do with some long lost ancestors of mine), it is a pride in a *personal* past, not a cultural, communal one.

There are many people like me in America, people with "ethnic" surnames but with none of the stereotyped characteristics that are supposed to go hand-in-hand with that particular ethnic group. With each succeeding generation, there are going to be many more. As immigrants die, replaced by the sons of immigrants and then the sons of sons of immigrants, a lot of the immigrant culture inevitably dies too. What strikes me as artificial is not the gradual transformation of the generations, but the pressures to preserve the old culture no matter what.

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bland assimilation, to evoke a distinct national, American, character. You can feel part of it watching old World War II movies, or reading *Huckleberry Finn*. It's there in the idealization of the small-town life of the pre-Depression era. Often, it is invented, using the leftover bits of old traditions, as jazz was invented, and baseball, and rock and roll. (Are these things sterile, or featureless? Was Mark Twain bland? Is Chuck Berry?) Above all, you can find it in the common heritage of all immigrants who came here in search of freedoms that could best be expressed in language that was universal, not parochial.

If we have to choose an ethnic framework on which to build, why not choose this one? What the New Ethnicity may demonstrate, in the end, is not the inability of a national culture to instill a sense of community and intimacy, but our failure of imagination in not realizing the possibilities. ■

That's why I become disconcerted and even vaguely insulted when it is naturally assumed (as it occasionally is) that I should act or think a certain way simply because of that last name I have. I delight in my name, make no mistake, but at the same time, I don't wave my hands around when I talk and I've never been able to arouse any indignation over "The Godfather." To act as if I did would be false. I had a long conversation a few years ago with a priest who ran the Italian-American Foundation, who insisted on calling me "brother" simply because we both had Italian names. What a tenuous bond on which to hang fraternity.

That is also why I have a hard time bemoaning the death of "ethnic" neighborhoods, even Italian ones. Are they really the bastions of rich culture they are said to be, or are they artificial relics of the past? Is Boston's North End, for example, teeming with ethnicity, or is it more a place where tourists can stop and eat "authentic" Italian cannoli at an "authentic" Italian cafe. Obviously, I think there is a lot more of the latter in ethnic neighborhoods than the ethnicists will admit.

But my larger gripe with ethnic neighborhoods is that for all their supposed cultural gusto, they have their repressive sides as well. The attitude of "sticking by one's own," so prevalent where I grew up, can be wonderfully beneficial. It can mean taking care of an aging relative or taking seriously one's responsibilities to the community. But it can also be not-so-beneficial, particularly when it has the effect of limiting life's possibilities for the young.

For those who revel in their neighborhoods, who love its camaraderie and warmth, who enjoy that life—well, let those be the people who live there. But too many of the people I grew up with have stayed and worked in Providence purely out of a sense of duty towards their families. Italian culture is weighted heavily toward family obligations; that is one of its greatest strengths and sources of joy. But sometimes it is carried too far. Does it make sense, for example, for a son to stay in the neighborhood to run a laundromat or a bar simply because his father started it? Wouldn't it be better for the son to do what he enjoys, or develop his talents, whether it meant staying in the neighborhood or moving to the other side of the country? For too many of my friends, that kind of choice wasn't encouraged.

One further point: As the accompanying article mentions, many of America's ethnic neighborhoods were created in the first place because the various immigrant groups needed the support and friendship of "their own kind" at a time when they were the victims of discrimination in America. Neighborhoods provided them all the things the rest of the country didn't; they helped make life bearable and pleasant. Now most of that discrimination has gone, and, partly as a result, I think, the ethnic neighborhoods are also on the decline. I don't lament either trend. —*Joseph Nocera*

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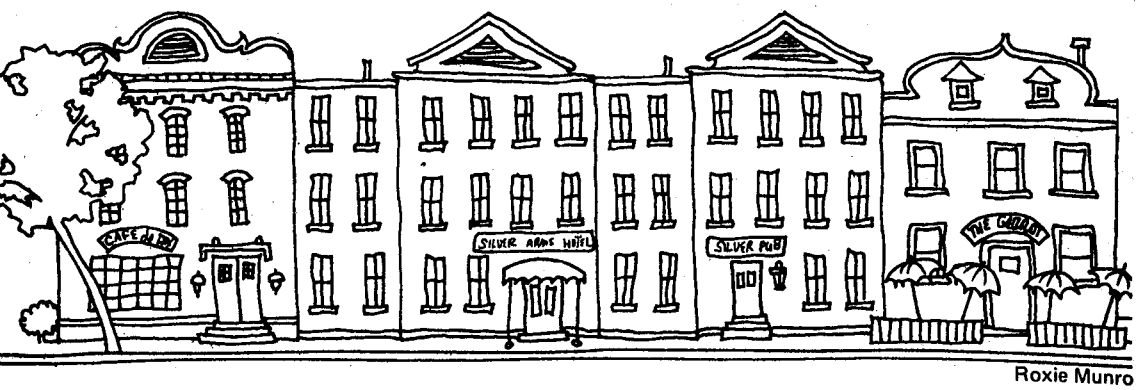

Roxie Munro

Where to Stay in Washington

Five Minutes' Walk from the White House

. . . and very convenient to practically everything else. Staying in a hotel in this area—bordered by Pennsylvania Avenue, 18th, K, and 14th Streets, NW—puts you a short walk away from not only the White House but the Treasury and Commerce Departments, the Veterans Administration, OMB, ACTION, and the FDIC. And since none of the hotels is more than two blocks from a Metro subway stop, you are also just a few minutes by subway from most of the other agencies and Capitol Hill, as well as the galleries and museums along the Mall. A lot of history has been made in this area—and still is—and the first three hotels listed below have been right in the center of it all:

The Hay-Adams, 800 16th St. NW, (202) 638-2260, was built in 1929 on the site of John Hay's and Henry Adams' homes, and has retained a 19th-century aura ever since: the decor dignified and statesman-like, with a walnut-paneled lobby and dining room, elaborately molded ceilings and traditional furnishings in the guest rooms, some of which have fireplaces. An advance request (and a higher rate) can assure you a room overlooking Lafayette Park and 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. The rooms have a lived-in air—a bit musty, with slightly worn furniture and window-unit air conditioning—which, depending on your proclivities, may add to the attractiveness of the hotel. Two function rooms and three suites can accommodate small meetings. Singles, $57-$85. Doubles, $70-$98. Suites, $95-$329. Weekend special, $130 per couple. Additional guests in room, $13; children under 14 in same room free. Valet parking in nearby garage.

The Hotel Washington, 15th and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, (202) 638-5900; (800) 424-9540, is an official landmark of the nation's capital. Opened in 1918, it has been the home of former speaker of the House John McCormack and dozens of other congressmen and senators. The hotel's greatest asset is its location—it's right across from Treasury and Commerce, close to the East Wing of the White House, and just two blocks from the Mall, the Washington Monument, and the beginning of museum-gallery row. From mid-May to mid-October a rooftop terrace is open for dining, drinking, and a marvelous view over the treetops of the government buildings, monuments, memorials, and on up and down the Potomac. The hotel welcomes groups and associations, with seven function rooms, three suites, a ballroom available for meetings, and a catering service. If 50 per cent of the attendees stay in the hotel, the meeting rooms are free. The guest rooms, like the rest of the hotel, have just been refurbished and, though small, are bright and pleasant. By requesting in advance and paying a higher rate, you can count on a view of Pennsylvania Avenue and the monuments and parks. 370 rooms: Singles, $44, $46; Doubles, $52, $54. Suites, $100-$173.

Having just undergone a $6-million renovation—from new plumbing to restoration of the original decor—the 50-year-old **Sheraton Carlton**, 923 16th St., NW, (202) 638-2626, is truly elegant. You

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feel it the minute you step into the lobby and are greeted by chandeliers, potted palms and huge floral arrangements, gold-framed baroque mirrors, marble-topped tables, and a high mosaic and carved-wood ceiling. While not quite as overwhelming as the lobby, the corridors and rooms have been completely renovated in attractive, traditional style. Among the events in the hotel's memory book: John L. Lewis lunching daily; the White House state dinners when the executive mansion was being restored; and a slew of famous overnighters, such as Dean Acheson, Al Jolson, Eddie Rickenbacker, and Katherine Hepburn. Like the Hay-Adams, the Carlton discourages large meetings—there are three board-meeting size function rooms. 250 rooms: Singles, $59-$75; Doubles, $71-$87; Suites, $125-$225. Weekend special, $125 per couple. Additional beds in room, $12 each; children under 12 in same room free. Parking available in garage a block away.

The Capital Hilton, 1001 16th St., NW, (202) 393-1000, is a *hotel* in every present-day sense of the word—it's got people (725 rooms-ful), restaurants (three plus a lounge), meeting facilities (15 meeting rooms and one of the most elegant ballrooms in town), ticket offices for seven major airlines and airport limousines right outside the door, 24-hour room service, tour desk, barbershop, et al. The rooms, all completely renovated, are attractively and comfortably furnished. Singles $45-$65. Doubles, $60-$80. Executive rooms (with sitting area), $90. Suites, $135-$155. Additional beds $15 each; children under 18 in same room free. Weekend specials $121-$160 per couple. Valet parking in garage next door.

On the other side of the White House from the Hotel Washington is the **Park Central**, 705 18th St., NW, (202) 393-4700. It's right across the street from the World Bank complex, and convenient to the Civil Service Commission, GSA, Department of the Interior, and George Washington University. The accommodations are modest compared to the other four hotels, but so are the prices. It's well suited for a longer stay—75 of the 250 rooms are efficiencies or suites with fully equipped kitchens (groceries available in drug store downstairs), there's a laundromat and roof garden. While there are no restaurants in the hotel itself, Blackie's Jr., for steaks and burgers, is right off the lobby, and there are coffee shops nearby for breakfast. Singles, $33. Doubles, $40. Efficiencies and suites: Singles, $34-$38; Doubles, $41-45. Additional beds in rooms, $5 each; children under 12 (limit two) in double room with parents free. Long-term rates, government, academic, and embassy discounts available. Parking garages nearby.

Of these hotels, the Capital Hilton has the two liveliest restaurants: The sea-shell and rattan **Trader Vic's** and the airy, contemporary **Twigs**. The traditional Polynesian-Indian-Oriental dishes, preceded or followed by Vic's rum concoctions, still prevail at **Trader Vic's**. In addition to a variety of continental entrees, **Twigs** provides a plant on every table and a flower pot for every drink.

The deficiencies in the food and service at **The Carlton** in the Sheraton-Carlton and the Hay-Adams' **President Adams** are made up for by the elegant decor. At **The Carlton**, the elaborate ceiling, marble pillars, cathedral windows, and chandeliers are a wonderful backdrop for an equally elegant, and expensive menu (including pheasant, Smithfield ham, Maine lobster).

Two other culinary features at the Sheraton-Carlton worth noting: afternoon tea, with pastries and sandwiches in the lobby court, and a hard-to-resist Sunday brunch for $11—with complimentary champagne and a buffet so comprehensive that it is easy to avoid the several mediocre offerings and still come away stuffed.

The continental-American menu at the **President Adams** has for its setting the high ceilings and rich wood paneling. Adjoining the dining room is the equally paneled **Lafayette Pavilion**, where cocktails and good jazz piano hold sway nightly. And there's no cover or minimum.

The Hotel Washington's **Two Continents** serves good, basic continental food; the best time to take advantage of it is from May to October, when the whole operation moves to the top of the hotel and becomes the **Sky Terrace Restaurant**. Drinks, as well as light luncheon dishes, are served outside on the terrace and dinner and lunch inside—supplemented, of course, by the best view in town.

—Carol Trueblood

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The Old Pro and the Comeback Kid

by Charles Peters

Theodore White and William Manchester are leading figures in the school of current history pioneered by American journalists after World War II. It began with John Hersey's *Hiroshima*, published in 1946, and was based heavily on interviews with participants in the events described. The accounts of the interviewees' experiences, quoted from living speech, had an immediacy, a believability, an impact that had been impossible to achieve when history had to rely on embalmed prose as its source.

Until Hersey and his group came along, most history was based on documents, and the part that wasn't was limited to interviews with the predictable major figures. A current historian might interview a governor or a president or a general, but most of them were the sort of people who live their lives for the sake of their memoirs, and who always had their official version of events neatly typed somewhere in their brains and ready for any questioner (before the tape recorder, of course, oral history was also a far more daunting task).

The archival approach bled stories of any trace of life. Connoisseurs of boredom will tell you that the absolute peak experience, guaranteed to induce instant slumber, is reading *The New York Times* of the 1930s. What was true of the *Times* was also true of other papers' coverage of current history, or at least of that part of it that was considered serious news—occasionally individual reporters or whole papers would breathe life into stories about sex, crime, or disaster. And what was true of the papers was also true of the way academics approached current history.

The breakthrough came with World War II, and may have had its roots in the tradition of disaster reporting that had sprung up in the twenties and thirties. You didn't just interview the owner of the blazing building, you also talked to the people who were living or working there. During World War II, journalists like Ernie Pyle began to cover the war through the eyes of the enlisted man. And in Bill Mauldin's cartoons, instead of the World War I Uncle Sam fighting Kaiser Wilhelm over a globe, we found Willie and Joe slogging through the mud or peeling potatoes on KP duty.

This style of reportage became very common by the end of the war; so that when Hersey went to Japan he, too, interviewed the average man. Now the new technique was at the service of a truly gifted writer. Hersey's account of how the people of Hiroshima reacted to the explosion of the first atomic bomb changed the way history would be written from then on.

At first the impact was felt only in the columns of magazines; news-

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Annual Political Book Award

The award for 1978 goes to

In Search of History
By Theodore H. White
(Harper and Row)

and

American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur
By William Manchester
(Little, Brown)

papers, especially the *Times*, went on their familiar, dull way. Then in the fifties came two popular histories of World War II that were based largely on interviews—John Toland's *Battle: The Story of the Bulge* and Cornelius Ryan's *The Longest Day*. In the sixties and the seventies, helped by the widespread availability of inexpensive tape recorders, the genre flourished, with, among others, White's *Making of the President* series, Manchester's *Death of a President*, David Halberstam's *The Best and the Brightest*, and Woodward and Bernstein's *The Final Days*. Academic historians also embraced the interview, and oral history projects were started at Columbia and other universities.

This movement had enormous impact on the reporting of politics, largely because Teddy White inspired scores of imitators. It also influenced coverage of the society as a whole through another of its off-shoots, which came to be called the new journalism.

The weaknesses of the movement were apparent from the beginning. First was the danger, which very few escaped, that the author would hide behind quotations and avoid responsibility for figuring out and explaining to his readers the significance of the events described. The other major flaw was a tendency to sentimentalize, to be too kind to the interviewee—(if movies were made of these books, an amazing number of their key sources would have to be played by Henry Fonda or Jimmy Stewart)—out of gratitude for his help or out of a desire to preserve a source, or simply because the kind of people who enjoy extensive interviewing often hate to hurt other people's feelings. This weakness had its good side, however, for it increased the possibility of empathy with and full understanding of participants. As Richard Reeves said about White, "Hell, he's soft on everybody, and that's not such a bad thing as one begins to realize rather late."

In 1974 the movement's masterpiece appeared with publication, first in *The New Yorker* and then by Alfred Knopf, of Robert Caro's *The Power Broker*, a marvelous book about Robert Moses and his effect on the physical and social landscape of New York. Based on 522 personal interviews and diligent documentary research, the book combined a clear analysis with a full human understanding of the man who built some great parks, and some disastrous highways and buildings, during his long career in the public agencies of the state of New York.

Douglas MacArthur was a similar mixture, as William Manchester's *American Caesar* shows. The MacArthur whose planes were destroyed

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on the ground at Clark Field and whose troops were surprised and routed by the Chinese Communists was the same man who brought democracy to Japan and a victory at Inchon that has to rank as one of the most brilliant in military history. Manchester's storytelling is distinguished by his ability to recognize relevant detail, for which we can be truly thankful at a time when we are told that a biographer's subject had a painful corn (Mary McCarthy on Hannah Arendt), or that he found a certain view "pleasant" or thought the soup was "good" (Barbara Tuchman quoting from Gen. Stillwell's diaries). Manchester becomes tiresome only in his repeated efforts to prove MacArthur's physical courage. "Dugout Doug" stories were, to be sure, legion among veterans of the Pacific. But a third of the way through his book Manchester convinces us that they were wrong and bores us as he heaps proof upon proof thereafter.

Manchester deserves praise most of all for his adherence to truth when the truth at one point explodes the conservative myth about MacArthur, while at another it shows how wrong the liberals were about the same man. Of course these truths would have been even more useful if they had been published when MacArthur was still an actor on the world stage. One has the sense that ninety per cent of Manchester's story could have been discovered by diligent, thoughtful reporters at the time it was happening.

But with the exception of Hersey's *Hiroshima* and White's writings about China, Manchester and the other authors of this school have tended to select tame subjects that will not risk the wrath of any significant part of the public. That may be why World War II is such a favorite of these writers.

Theodore White suggests one reason why these authors avoid "hot" subjects or joining the debate on major issues. Having been persecuted—almost denied security clearance—because of his truthful reporting from China in the forties, he chose the safe grounds of Europe and the Marshall plan in the fifties, where unlike China, objective reporting would please the establishment; in the sixties, he wrote about political campaigns—the horse-race aspect rather than the ideological. In choosing this course, White and the others were typical of the World War II generation. Having risked their lives in the cold and mud of Europe or the heat and mud of the Pacific, they wanted a safe harbor.

In a sense they deserved safety, but the country suffered terribly because of it. Suppose, for example, more writers had helped White tell the truth about China. We might have avoided the deaths in Korea—if you're in your late forties now, a few of your friends lie there today—for White knew the Chou En-lai, who, in the late 1940s, was desperately trying to bring the reasonable men in his camp together with the reasonable men in our government. Unfortunately there was only one Teddy White among the journalists, and only a few John Stewart Services in the government. The rest didn't want trouble, they wanted the comfortable life—and soon Teddy White joined them.

But at the time he didn't understand that he was going there. He could distinguish himself from "men like me suffering from such charges who dropped out of journalism—to become press agents and real estate agents, to go into brokerage houses, to live in exile, to hide if they could in TV." In his gratitude to those who spared him that fate—Henry Luce, even though he cut White's copy, Max Ascoli of *The Reporter* magazine, even though he and White were constantly at war; *Collier's*, even though it required White to do some cotton-candy stories—White reminds one that for people of his generation to manage to stay in journalism as he did, to be permitted by the system to function in a job he liked, and to make a lot of money at the same time was the greatest victory in life one could hope for.

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The beauty of Teddy White is that he now realizes what happened to him. He's like Wayne Morris or John Garfield in those old boxing movies, sluggers who got in the habit of taking dives. Just when you thought he was washed up (remember *The Making of the President 1972*, where he missed all his opportunities to get the Watergate story), he picked himself off the canvas with *Breach of Faith* and now scores a genuine triumph in *In Search of History*.

Self-awareness is hard to come by at any time. It's particularly hard as one grows older and as it becomes increasingly painful to face the fact that large parts of one's life may have been misspent or that truly serious mistakes were made. This makes White's book all the more remarkable.

Here is the Harvard "meatball," whose nose had always been too obviously pressed against the window of the Porcellian Club, now saying: ". . . older and wiser and having been tugged too often by friendship and affection for men I have reported, I am as wary of friendship with the great as a reformed drunkard of the taste of alcohol."

And the man who sought safety in the fifties could now see clearly what he had done: "As for myself, no amount of self-reproach will reconcile me, even today, to the self-doubt that followed my clearance. From 1954 to 1972, I never wrote another article about the China I knew so well; and only four articles on Vietnam. . . . I recognize now that I also consciously withdrew from a reportorial area of intense past interest to me—arms and defense, weaponry and combat. I had gone down that road far enough in reporting the Oppenheimer case to know I had made powerful enemies in the defense establishment. . . . A self-censorship imposed not by government but by prudence, circumscribed me—as it circumscribed countless others. . . . I know that from then on and for years I deliberately ignored the dynamics of foreign policy and defense because too much danger lurked there; and for that shirking I am now ashamed." ■

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The Failure of Barbara Jordan's Success

by Joseph Nocera

You could see her every day from the press galleries, sitting in the same place, doing the same things. It didn't seem to matter whether the debate was over some sweeping national concern or whether it was a minor parochial dispute, whether there were hundreds of people milling around or whether the chamber was deserted, Barbara Jordan would be there on the floor of the House of Representatives in her self-appointed seat, three rows back near the middle aisle. "You can hear better on the center aisle," she writes in her new book, *Barbara Jordan: A Self-Portrait*, (Doubleday), "and you can catch the eye of the presiding officer better on the center aisle, as you are in his direct line of vision. So I decided that is where I would always sit, leaving one seat next to me on the aisle vacant for those people who might want to stop and visit from time to time."

As it turns out, Barbara Jordan didn't have much need for catching the eye of the presiding officer. In the six years she was in Congress—until she retired last year—Jordan rarely spoke out on the floor, preferring instead to spend her time reading her correspondence and briefing papers, or listening to the often deadly-dull debates. On the other hand, having the extra seat on the aisle turned out to be quite a prescient move, for Jordan was often visited by her colleagues, particularly fellow Texans and Southerners, many of them the hard-rock conservatives who throughout her political career have felt most comfortable with her.

According to the legend of Barbara Jordan (and it is a part of the legend she nurtures in the book), this seat is where she spun a lot of her special magic. Jordan has always insisted in interviews that she was a professional politician first and foremost (as opposed to being, say, a "professional" black or liberal or woman), and it is from that seat that she did most of her politicking. The men who sat next to her loved it when she joshed with them, and listened when she counseled them. Her political instincts are supposed to be superb, and when she argued one-on-one, she may well have been the most persuasive person in Congress. "She used to like to regale folks with stories about how she talked someone like Omar Burleson [until he retired, one of the real arch-conservatives of the Texas congressional delegation] into switching his vote on something after a little nudge from her," says one person who has heard her tell some of those stories (and who, like most of the people interviewed for this article, agreed to talk about her only if guaranteed anonymity). Rep. Charles Wilson of Texas, purportedly her closest friend in Congress, once told *Texas Monthly* that she was "the *most* influential member of Congress. I mean if you're talking about the one person who is able to get just *anybody* to stop and listen to what she has to say and convince them that she's right, then you're talking about Barbara."

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Photo by Diana H. Walker

For all of us who have heard her speak—and that probably includes a majority of Americans—the idea of her being especially influential undoubtedly rings true. When, as a member of the House Judiciary Committee, she talked about impeaching Richard Nixon, she electrified and stunned us with the eloquence of her words. ("My faith in the Constitution is whole. It is complete. It is total.")

Two years later, when she was a keynote speaker at the Democratic Convention, Jordan again was overpowering. Again, we listened in awe to the flights of her oratory. Then the rumors began that she would be the vice-presidential nominee, and later, that she would be a cabinet secretary or the next Supreme Court justice, and it wasn't too long before it became part of the conventional political wisdom that if a black or a woman was ever going to be elected president someday, it would surely be Barbara Jordan. In a very short span of time she had become a genuine national superstar, a household name, and one of the most admired people in America. She was a symbol, in the most uplifting sort of way, of how far blacks and women had come in this country.

And yet. . . since her retirement from Congress last year and the publication of her very revealing book last month, something nags, and it gets back to that seat in the middle aisle. When she first came to Congress, Jordan told her staff that she would be spending much of her time on the floor so she could familiarize herself with the intricacies of the rules and begin cultivating the people who had real power. By her last year in office she had another, more personal reason—painful calcium deposits on her knees made it difficult for her to get from place to place.

But taken in their entirety, six years is a long time to sit in one place. Indeed, one of the first lessons usually learned in Congress is that much of the time spent on the floor is time wasted; that is not where personal or national agendas are formed, not where the "issues" are framed, not where laws are written. The House floor is a *reactive* place, where one votes upon the work of others. Barbara Jordan was a reactive congresswoman, willing to vote with the liberals almost every time out (except on important oil and gas votes—she was, after all, from Houston), but unwilling to take initiatives herself. Her accomplishments in Congress, for someone of her stature, are consequently painfully thin.

So the question begs: what did she do with all her gifts—her eloquence, her political abilities, her intelligence, her unquestioned powers to cajole and influence? The answer, implied throughout the book and borne out by talking to people who watched her or

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worked with her in Congress, seems to have been not very much at all.

Rocking the Boat

Barbara Jordan: A Self-Portrait is going to disappoint a lot of the people who found her so inspiring during the impeachment hearings and at the Democratic Convention. It is not an inspiring book. It is, instead, her version of "making it" in a world dominated by white males. This she did in part by bestowing friendship ("Barbara never formed friendships, she bestowed them," said one long-time observer) in the Texas Senate and Congress. She made it a point to joke and work with those who had been around those institutions longer, to show them she was *safe*, that she wasn't some wild-eyed radical out to do them in. She showed the kind of respect for their institutions that they appreciated and played the game by their rules. Her relations with the congressional black caucus were chilly at best, and with the women's caucus non-existent—she went to great lengths to disassociate herself from both groups—and this further endeared her to the congressional establishment. The people in those caucuses were boat-rockers, and Barbara Jordan didn't rock the boat.

If making friends with the right people is one part of this success story, then ambition is the other. It has never been any secret that Barbara Jordan was ambitious—she herself made no effort to hide it, telling reporters "off-the-record," for example, that she would have liked to run for the Senate if she thought she could have won. What comes through most strongly in this book, however, is how single-minded her ambition was, how overwhelmingly important a force it was in her life. The sense one gets upon finishing this book is that Barbara Jordan was a person who derived her greatest satisfactions from each additional honor, each new step on the way to stardom.

"With all she had going against her, I don't think she would have ever gotten here if she hadn't been single-minded about it," says Rep. Bob Eckhardt, a fellow Texas liberal and generally an admirer of Jordan's. Perhaps. But like a lot of America's best and brightest, Barbara Jordan came to see Making It as its own reward; in her climb for the status and glory of being someone special, somewhere along the line she lost sight of what should have been more important. She forgot she had been elected to serve.

Once in the book she lets us know that she understands that the desire to serve is supposed to be the point of getting into politics in the first place. "Change continued to be incredibly slow," writes co-author Shelby Hearon (the book, by the way, is part autobiography, written by Jordan, and part biography, written by Hearon). "Barbara felt that from the time of the *Brown* decision to the *Ross* case nothing else had happened [to eliminate segregation]. The only way to move things along, she concluded, was to get into a position where you could implement the laws. So, for the first time, she began to think seriously about politics."

But by the time she entered Congress years later, most vestiges of that kind of idealism had gone. As a freshman congresswoman, Jordan came to Washington to interview potential staffers and asked *them* what they thought she should get involved in. When, once the session began, her new staff tried to push her in directions they thought she would be interested in, she would usually say, "I'll think about it," and the matter would never come up again.

Throughout her career, she gagged at being called a symbol, yet she rarely made any effort to rise above her symbolic importance. That she could have done so—easily—was obvious to just about anyone who ever came into contact with her. Unlike so many of our other politicians similarly swept away by the glamor of their own

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stardom, Jordan was one who could make a difference when she wanted to. Those few times she did get involved in something—as during the debate over the Voting Rights extension, when she played a key role in getting Texas included under the act—she was, everyone agrees, brilliant, persuasive, and forceful. And that is also why it seems to pain people to classify her as "just another ambitious politician," when in many ways that is an accurate description of her.

'Another Milestone'

Barbara Jordan's story begins in Houston's Fifth Ward, a large black section of the city, where she was born and raised at a time when segregation was still the law, and where she realized, at some point during her high school years, that she had the ability to stand out. "I always liked to have some award or something," she says. At that age, this is a most natural reaction; the chance to be special, whether it's as an athlete, a scholar, or even a delinquent, is a key motivator, and Barbara Jordan was as susceptible as anyone. She remembers running for "Girl of the Year," because "all of the clubs and organizations give you a gift." Recognizing around that time that she had a gift for public speaking, she began participating in oratorical contests. Again, the motivation was to bring home the medals: "Then we would have a ceremony and a presentation of the trophies to the school. And we declaimers and debaters felt self-important with the little box of three-by-five-inch index cards on which we kept our notes. These were our badge of superiority over those others who could not do things like that." She wins an oratorical award and tells the local black newspaper: "It's just another milestone I have passed; it's just the beginning."

She graduates from Texas Southern University and later, Boston University Law School, where she finds that she can cope and succeed in the white world, and then it is time to decide what to do with her life. "I could have gotten a job at John Hancock Insurance Company [in Boston] as one of the hundreds of lawyers they have doing various claims and things. But when the personnel person said that I could have a job and took me down the hall to show me the office I could have had, it was one of a row of little cubbyholes all divided by plywood. So I thanked him very much and left. This required some reconsideration. I thought: Now, look—true the air is freer up here, true the opportunities are probably greater, but nobody in Boston, Massachusetts is interested in *the advancement of Barbara Jordan* [emphasis added]. They don't know you. . . . I decided maybe it makes more sense to go home where people will be interested in helping you." So that's what she did, setting up a small law office in Houston, where she began to dabble in politics.

She joined the Harris County Democrats, a group of Texas liberals who ran slates of candidates for public office (and usually lost). By 1962, she had become their best speaker, and that year she ran for public office for the first time as a candidate for the Texas House of Representatives.

This was an interesting time for Jordan; she was trying hard to be seen not as a black woman symbol but as a concerned citizen who cared about issues. Her issues, however, left something to be desired. "I don't remember in which era of Texas government it was, but some governor talked about *retrenchment* and *reform*, and I liked the sound of those words. I thought: Now here are two nice, fine words. I thought about them, and I decided: That will be my campaign theme. Retrenchment and reform. And I began to work them into my campaign speeches after I had announced for the House of Representatives."

She was hustling: "I continued to go around to speak and meet people and testify before committees in the Texas

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Legislature on pending educational bills that would benefit blacks. All that whole bit in order to get my name well-known."

And dreaming: "One day I went to Austin to testify, and when I sat up in the House gallery and looked down at [one] desk I thought, 'I ought to be in his place. I deserve it.'"

And losing. Jordan lost races in 1962 and 1964, because in those days all candidates had to run countywide and no black in Texas was about to win an entire county. She became embittered, feeling she had been used because of her speaking prowess to help elect other Harris County Democrats, (including Eckhardt), and that they all secretly knew she would lose.

After the second loss, she says, "The first order of business was to decide: Is politics worth staying in for me?" It was, of course, and the rest is history. In 1965, Harris County was forced to reapportion its legislative districts after the Supreme Court ruled for "one-man, one-vote." Jordan this time ran as a black woman—"She would sell Barbara Jordan," Hearon writes—"and even though her opponent had impeccable liberal credentials, she crushed him by asking: "CAN A WHITE MAN WIN? NO. NOT THIS TIME."

Of her time in the Texas Senate, William Broyles of *Texas Monthly* has written: "This first black state senator had not a single item in her platform designed to benefit blacks. She came out for traditional bread-and-butter liberal issues. . . . She also strongly supported limits on oyster dredging, and played political expediency with welfare. . . . It was a solid, traditional political platform. It was also a pale reflection of her extraordinary rhetoric and presence. Because of her charisma, she led people to expect that she would set things right, and they didn't have oyster dredging in mind."

Jordan was determined to make these white males like her, so she sat and watched, learned the rules, formed alliances with the most conservative of them, and generally spoke to them on their own terms. She was not unlike the converted Catholic who becomes more devout than the Pope. Having overcome obstacles to gain entrance in the club, she seemed to want nothing so badly as to be able to adapt to her new surroundings, to be accepted by the congregation. Once she wrote a bill to outlaw employment discrimination and it passed 30-1. There wasn't any reason for her colleagues to worry that it would actually do anything about employment discrimination, however. Her bill had no teeth.

And so, the white male club elected her Outstanding Freshman Senator, and she, in turn, called them all her friends. Before leaving the Senate, she was named Governor for a Day, a purely symbolic title yet one, the book makes clear, in which she reveled. It was another milestone.

The Quick Fix

Jordan came to Congress in 1973, and well before her last term, I'm told, she was a woman bored with her work. The glory days of impeachment had come and gone, as had the initial exhilaration of being elected to Congress. Quickly she had become a star—she was perhaps the best known person in Congress by the end of her first term—and it seemed difficult for her to keep motivated after that. She was easily frustrated by the workings of Congress, quickly annoyed at how long it took to get anywhere. ". . . [I]t was easy to become bogged down in the minutiae of committee meetings and settings and roll call votes and quorum calls and spend many hours doing things that you really had no interest in doing," she writes. Even in her first year, there were portents of this. A number of times, after particularly bad days, Jordan would storm into her office and announce to anyone within earshot: "I don't need this place, you know. I can leave any time."

During the heady days of impeachment she had played an important role

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on the Judiciary Committee, for chairman Peter Rodino trusted her instincts and had consulted her practically daily. But later she would not go out of her way even to attend her subcommittee meetings, and when she did, she had nothing to offer. She just sat and listened.

By the end of her third year, she had all but stopped pushing for bills she wrote or offering amendments. Once in a while she would drop a bill into the congressional hopper and there it would die. She began spending more time than ever on the House floor. The last six months of her congressional career, even her staff had a hard time seeing her because her co-author, Hearon, had become a de-facto administrative assistant, practically running the office while the two of them wrote the book.

What Jordan never lost her taste for was the politics of the House. She may have been absent at subcommittee meetings, but she never missed a meeting of the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, a group of Democrats who decide who is going to be on what committee and perform other "political" functions. (Here, too, the liberals soon became resigned to the fact that Barbara Jordan would invariably side with the conservatives.) She quietly made a few overtures to the House leadership in an effort to get on the House Rules Committee at a time when the leaders were trying to make the committee less independent and more subservient to their wishes. That would have been all right with Jordan, who would have liked working for the leadership, thus putting them in her political debt.

It is often said in her defense that Barbara Jordan was not the kind of person willing to stretch herself too thin. She had only one legislative assistant, so she wouldn't have to feel badgered by a half-dozen assistants all pushing her in a half-dozen different directions, and she spent a lot of her time simply studying the various bills coming up on the floor.

That is also why she resented the black and women's caucuses. As with the Harris County Democrats, she felt they were trying to "use" her for their purposes. They were trying to stretch her too thin, she thought, always asking her to sign onto some letter to the president, or to join them in a press conference, or to speak out on something on their behalf. What she wouldn't see is that the caucuses, and the Harris County Democrats, were full of people *working* towards something, committed to some set of goals. All Jordan could see was that *she*, Barbara Jordan, was being asked to perform a favor, for which she personally would get nothing in return.

If that sounds a bit harsh, contrast it with her attitude towards those whom she believed could help her: "When Congressman [George] Mahon, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, interrupted her on another phone call to ask if she would sing with him at the West Texas Chamber of Commerce meeting, she was jocular and glad to oblige," writes Hearon. "Doing favors was part and parcel of the ongoing business of doing business in the Congress. . . . "

She granted a lot of those favors by doing what she did with Mahon—making appearances and speeches. While working in Congress can be an essentially thankless, anonymous task, the business of speechmaking brought with it an immediate gratification. She could always bring down the house, no matter what the audience or the topic. It was a quick fix—a reaffirmation of her stardom.

As such, it became something she did often (and profitably—Jordan usually made in the neighborhood of $12,000 a year in honoraria). She campaigned for Carter at his request (another political chit), and recalled: "I don't know whether Carter ought to thank me for campaigning for him, or I ought to thank him for sending me to these places to campaign because I was having a ball. The reaction to *me* was what turned me on."

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She made her famous speech at the Democratic Convention at the request of fellow Texan Robert Strauss (add another political chit) and glowed in the warmth of the nation's applause. Afterwards, there was a party in the VIP lounge, and Jordan was the star there too. "They were all kissing my ass, that's all I can say about that time."

After Carter was elected, Jordan began looking for new milestones. Congress had already lost its luster. There was a great deal of talk about her becoming a member of the cabinet, but most of it didn't interest her. To her, writes Hearon, "the idea of a cabinet post seemed to offer nothing more substantive than another First Time. More immediate, and therefore more real to her, was the campaign trail with its familiar thrill of bringing audiences to their feet." And Jordan adds: "I knew lots of things I didn't want to do. I didn't want HEW; a black woman head of HEW couldn't do a thing that would be of interest." What she did want was Attorney General. While it is never spelled out in the book, the sense one gets is that she felt HEW was the kind of cabinet post that a Pat Harris might be named to, but only *Barbara Jordan* could pull down Attorney General. Attorney General wouldn't just be *any* First Time. Here would be another notch to her belt.

She was never seriously considered for the post, particularly after her one meeting with the Carter people turned into a debacle—they were stunned and angered by her refusal to even listen to any offers other than Attorney General.

Well after he was elected, and his Cabinet firmly in place, Carter again asked Jordan to campaign, this time for Brendan Byrne in New Jersey. She turned him down. "I had done my thing for Carter at the time of his campaigning and helping with the election," she writes. "And I hadn't called in any of those chits at that point. I decided: I don't need to stockpile favors at the White House, so I won't go to New Jersey. That's just politics."

Collecting Pens

Jordan left Congress last year without looking back. Part of the reason is that she had gotten from it all she wanted—the fame and recognition. The milestone had been achieved; she had no further need for Congress. (Another part of the reason may well have been her health, which has been rumored for years to be worse than she will publicly admit.)

Before leaving Congress, she made one of her last major public appearances at a Harvard commencement, where she gave the address. Her description of the event reveals a lot about why Barbara Jordan was such a disappointment as a public official.

"And I had done of lot of those [commencement addresses]; had been awarded, at that juncture, twenty-two doctoral degrees, including one at Boston and one scheduled at Princeton. So I was thinking: Well, maybe I don't need to do any more of those. How many commencement speeches do you give? How many honorary degrees do you want?

"Then I got a letter from Harvard University. It had voted to give me an honorary doctoral degree at its June commencement. So I answered myself: Well, that's one you take. How many more? One more."

The speech that day, given in her usual ringing, inspiring tone, was about the lack of citizen participation in government. She spoke in particular about the regulatory agencies, how difficult it was for an ordinary citizen to poke his nose into the business of the Atomic Energy Commission, for example, how the rules were stacked against it, and the expenses were too high.

"The people want in," she said.

"How much longer, how much longer will people tolerate a network of illusions and vacuous rhetoric? How much longer?" she said.

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"We want to be in control of our lives. Whether we are jungle fighters, craftsmen, company men, gamesmen, we want to be in control. And when the government erodes that control, we are not comfortable," she said.

"The stakes are too high for government to be a spectator sport," she said.

The crowd, of course, was in awe, and what no one thought to ask was what had Barbara Jordan done to make government less a spectator sport? Why hadn't she tried to make it easier for people to intervene in the proceedings of the Atomic Energy Commission if that is what she thought important? Why hadn't she *done* anything to help Americans take more control of their lives?

In her efforts to Make It, she had come to see life as a collection of awards, of milestones to be achieved and then abandoned for newer heights. Certainly she was bored by Congress (and certainly Congress can be a boring place), but it didn't help much that she looked at the passage of bills as a chance to collect pens from a President—which is precisely how she looked at it. ("How many times do you keep presenting a bill and getting it passed and getting a President to sign it? How many pens do you want?") Certainly, HEW would have been a difficult place to manage, but it didn't help that Barbara Jordan wasn't even willing to try. To her it didn't matter that HEW touches the lives of all of us; it just didn't sparkle with the right kind of First Time.

And certainly she had gone far, but for what purpose? The Voting Rights Act was a nice bit of work, but it didn't come close to tapping the immense potential of Barbara Jordan. If the minutiae of legislation bored her, there were plenty of other things she could have done. To name but one, Jordan was in a unique position in the House to bring some sense to the question of energy prices. As the congresswoman from oil-rich Houston, she had the trust and support of the oil and gas industry, who yearn for ever-higher prices. As the congresswoman from the largest ghetto in Texas, she was revered by the poor, whose need for cheap energy is just as pressing.

She was the one person both sides trusted; had she the inclination she could have helped cut through the hyperbole and the rhetoric surrounding the issue. By talking to both sides, she could have brought some rationality to our energy mess. She had the talent to pull off something like that. But she never had the inclination.

The One Speech Legacy

"What is different about tonight?" she asked the audience at the Democratic Convention. "It is that I, Barbara Jordan, am a keynote speaker." She needed to get beyond looking at herself as a symbol—"I, Barbara Jordan"—but she refused to do so. Ultimately, her vision was too limited; she never saw the potential for doing good with her talents. What's remarkable about her book, I suppose, is its underlying admission of that failure. By far the bulk of it is about making it—winning the oratorical awards and Girl of the Year, getting into the Texas Senate and being Governor for a Day, coming to Congress and making the famous impeachment speech, and the convention speech, and finally making that trip to Harvard.

I asked one Texas politico whether he thought she had left a legacy. "Surely," he said, "her impeachment speech will be recited by schoolchildren for generations to come." I tend to doubt that, but even if I'm wrong, that hardly seems enough. Barbara Jordan was a symbol and a hero at a time when America yearned for someone like her. *Barbara Jordan: A Self-Portrait* tells a lot about how she became that symbol, and almost nothing about what she did when she got there. And the reason for that, quite simply, is that Barbara Jordan never got around to doing very much. ■

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Who's Who in the Carter Administration

Margery Waxman Smith's appointment as general counsel of the Office of Personnel Management is another example of the Carter administration's ineptitude in appraising women. Her reputation at the Federal Trade Commission, where she was executive director, was that of a hard worker, but a less-than sparkling lawyer and administrator. But she has good credentials (Covington and Burling) and no doubt received excellent recommendations from her FTC colleagues, who could do both her and the FTC a favor by seeing that she was promoted to a job elsewhere. . . . Our White House sources tell us that **Bernie Aronson** is on his way out as a Carter speechwriter. He's a splendid fellow, but apparently **Rafshoon** and **Schneiders** neglected to find out whether he could write. We understand that **Rick Hertzberg**, the one who looks like Warren Beatty, is doing all the writing. . . . The Teamsters, according to Carole Shifrin of *The Washington Post*, have told Carter to name **Thomas Gray**, an assistant to the governor of Kentucky, to the Interstate Commerce Commission.

In

WHITE HOUSE

Deputy Assistant to the President—**William Simpson** has been administrative assistant to now retired Sen. James O. Eastland. He will be working for **Hamilton Jordan**.

Deputy for Congressional and Legislative Affairs, President's Council on Wage and Price Stability—**Alvin From** was staff director of the Senate Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on International Relations.

Representative for Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions Negotiations—**Jonathan Dean** has been acting representative since 1978. He will be given ambassadorial rank.

AGRICULTURE

Administrator, Food Safety and Quality Service—**Donald L. Houston** has been deputy administrator of the department's meat and poultry inspection program.

Acting Administrator, Food and Nutrition—**Robert Greenstein** was a special assistant to Secretary Bob Bergland.

DEFENSE

Special Assistant to the Secretary—**Togo D. West Jr.** has been General Counsel of the Navy. He will replace John G. Kester, who resigned to join a Washington law firm.

HEW

Deputy Undersecretary, Office of International Affairs—**Peter D. Bell** has been special assistant to Secretary Joseph Califano.

HUD

Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity—**Sterling Tucker** was chairman of the District of Columbia City Council and a recent unsuccessful candidate for mayor of Washington.

STATE

Ambassador to the People's Republic of China—**Leonard Woodcock** has been chief liaison officer to China since 1977.

Ambassador to Tunisia—**Stephen Bosworth** has been Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Resources and Food Policy.

Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Control—**K. Malthea Fako** has been promoted from senior advisor. She has also served as a special assistant to the President on drug abuse.

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TREASURY

Associate Legislative Counsel—**Bradford L. Ferguson** has been special assistant to Donald Lubick, Assistant Secretary for Tax Policy, and was formerly a Senate aide to Walter Mondale.

AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS

Central Intelligence Agency
Administrative Deputy Director—**Donald I. Wortman** has been deputy commissioner of the Social Security Administration. He replaces John Blake, who is retiring from the post after 35 years.

Commission on Civil Rights
Staff Director—**Luis Nunez** has been acting and deputy staff director and was formerly executive director of ASPIRA, a national Puerto Rican community organization.

Commodity Futures Trading Commission
Chairman—**James M. Stone** was Commissioner of Insurance for Massachusetts. In that position he gained a reputation as a strong advocate of consumer interests.

Federal Communications Commission
Member—**Anne P. Jones** was general counsel of the Federal Home Loan Board.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
Chairman—**Irving R. Sprague** has been an aide to Tip O'Neill.

Federal Labor Relations Authority
Chairman of the Board—**Ronald W. Naughton** was co-director of the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations of the University of Michigan.

Federal National Mortgage Association
Chief Economist—**Peter Treadway** has been a senior economist at the agency.

NATIONAL REVIEW devotes its entire current issue (Feb. 2) to the Anti-Nuclear Lobby and what it is costing America. Editor Wm. F. Buckley Jr. calls this special issue "perhaps the single most important issue of the magazine ever published." It is now available at $2 per copy; send your order to the address indicated Don't miss it!

Send $2 now to **National Review**, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Ask for "Special Energy Issue."

Federal Trade Commission
Executive Director—**Christian S. White** was assistant to the chairman of the FTC, Michael Pertschuk.

General Services Administration
Inspector General—**Kurt Muellenberg** has been chief of the Justice Department's organized crime section. His selection ends a struggle between GSA Administrator Jay Solomon and the White House over who would fill the newly-created position. Solomon had supported Irwin Borowski, a Securities and Exchange Commission attorney, for the job.

National Advisory Commission on Women
Co-Chairperson—**Marjorie Bell Chambers** is president of the American Association of University Women.

National Commission on Social Security
Chairman—**Milton S. Gwitzman** is an attorney and author of several works on tax and economic policy.

Office of Personnel Management
Associate Director for executive personnel and management development—**Sally H. Greenberg** has been assistant director in the bureau of personnel management.

General Counsel—**Margery Waxman Smith** has been executive director of the Federal Trade Commission.

Associate Director for Agency Relations—**George J. McQuoid** has been deputy executive director of the Civil Service Commission.

Regulatory Council
Executive Director—**Peter J. Petkas** has been director of the government reorganization project at the Office of Management and Budget.

Out

WHITE HOUSE

Special Assistant to the President for Media and Public Affairs—**Barry Jagoda** has left to open his own consulting office specializing in computerized communications systems.

COMMERCE

Director, Bureau of the Census—**Manuel D. Plotkin** has resigned "to avoid any

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N	O	B	E	L	P	E	A	C	E	P	R	I	Z	E
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appearance of conflict of interest" in connection with the discrimination lawsuit Sears Roebuck, from which he is on leave of absence, recently filed against a number of agencies, including the Census Bureau.

HEW

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation—**Peter Schuck** will leave in July to teach at Yale University Law School. He has also been named a resident fellow of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

STATE

Administrator, Agency for International Development—**John J. Gilligan** resigned under pressure from Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, with whom he had personal and policy disagreements. The White House indicated that Gilligan would be appointed to another post.

TREASURY

Director, Bureau of Engraving and Printing—**Seymour Berry** is leaving tc work with Sam H. Jaffee, a Washington labor arbitrator. Because of recent scandals involving the awarding of food stamp contracts, the Secretary of the Treasury last month took away the Bureau's power to award contracts.

AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS

Federal Trade Commission
Commissioner—**Elizabeth Hanford Dole** is resigning March 15.

National Advisory Committee for Women
Co-Chairperson—**Bella Abzug** was fired by President Carter after a number of press releases emerged from the committee critical of the administration's budget proposals for social programs.

Co-Chairperson—**Carmen Degado Votaw** resigned in protest over Abzug's firing.

Renegotiation Board
Chairman—**Goodwin Chase** resigned after two years in his post at this small agency, which reviews defense and space contracts to determine whether a contractor's profits are excessive. The resignation leaves the Board with two members and three vacancies, making it incapable of acting.

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Love and the Designated Hitter Rule

by Nicholas Lemann

Final Payments by Mary Gordon (Random House), a first novel published last year to considerable acclaim, is an admirable book—admirable for its clean, careful, perceptive, and accurate writing, and for its main themes, extremely unusual for a novel about a young single person looking for love in New York in the seventies. *Final Payments* is about freedom and sex, as befits the times, but it's more importantly about love and morality, and caring for others.

Its heroine, Isabel Moore, is a young woman of 30 from a working-class neighborhood in Queens, who has spent eleven years caring for her invalid father and is suddenly released from that duty by his death. "He had a stroke when I was nineteen; I nursed him until he died eleven years later," Isabel says in the book's opening scene. "This strikes everyone in our decade as unusual, barbarous, cruel. To me, it was not only inevitable, but natural." It was also, as the book makes clear, more complicated than that; Isabel comes from a conservative Catholic background, and she is continually torn between the new world to which she is suddenly exposed—the world of divorced friends, love affairs with married men, working, living alone—and the world from which she has just emerged, one of total abnegation and self-sacrifice. Her great struggle is with finding a middle course between the two.

The only major flaw in Gordon's depiction of life is that her men aren't nearly as good as her women—especially her most important man. All the female characters in *Final Payments* are drawn stubbornly imperfect, but Isabel's lover, alas, is the sort of dreamboat who descends on a cloud into the lives of the heroines of stories in *Cosmopolitan*—tall, handsome, "older," with one of those jobs (he's a veterinarian) where you get to be sensitive and compassionate but also make lots of money. He even has a dreamboat name: Hugh Slade. Isabel and Hugh fall in love and all looks rosy, until Hugh's wife confronts Isabel and asks her to back off. Suddenly Isabel is overcome with guilt, and grief for her father. She breaks off with Hugh, lets herself deteriorate physically, and goes off to spend her life ministering to a shrewish, hateful woman named Margaret, who used to be her father's housemaid.

But at the end of the book Isabel goes through an epiphany (conveniently taking place during Easter week), during which she realizes she is pursuing a destructive course. "We must not deprive ourselves, our loved ones, of the luxury of our extravagant affections," she tells herself. "We must not try to second-guess death by refusing to love the ones we loved in favor of the anonymous poor." So she

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leaves Margaret and prepares to go back to Hugh. Obviously this is the right course for Isabel; Gordon takes pains to make it obvious by creating a Margaret who is irredeemably horrible, and a Hugh who is wonderful, and by filling Isabel's period of total altruism with images of ugliness and physical decay.

Still, there remains that problem of how to find that middle course, how Isabel can leave her life of caring for someone she doesn't love, but still can bring some good to the world—as she says, "Perhaps I could give reasonably without giving my life." She does not, after all, want to join wholeheartedly in the serried ranks of the Me Generation. In the final pages of the book, the solution comes to her in a flash: "I would work for a government, a dealer in charity without the weights of love. . . . Governments gave money and did not ask for love. Money was beautiful; if you could give money and not want love in return, you could change lives without giving up your own life."

This is plainly the magic answer of somebody who has been cooped up in a row house in Queens for eleven years. Isabel Moore is probably the last person in America, real or imagined, who retains such total faith in the ability of the government to help those in need. The federal government now spends $63.9 billion on caring for the dependent, and just about everybody else seems to think most of it is going to waste. On the right (old, new, and neo) the objection is that all those programs cost too much and are inefficiently and even fraudulently run. Liberals are uncomfortable with them because they degrade and oppress their beneficiaries. Radicals have always been hostile to welfare-state social programs on the grounds that they are mild palliatives designed to obscure deep structural problems.

These are valid objections, and they make it hard to accept Gordon's idea that working for the government is the way to do good. Indeed, even if the government suddenly were to overcome all its flaws, the notion that money can solve people's problems better than love still wouldn't make sense. Of course, some money is absolutely necessary; nobody in this country should lack the funds to feed and house and take care of himself and his dependents. But over the course of history, love has done the better job. Humans are the only animals that go through lengthy periods of near-total dependency, just after birth and just before death, so the need for some caring mechanism has always been present. It has come, over time, from the family, with love the activating force. Many more dependent people have been well cared for by their families than by the government. Those most in need today are those without relatives who can do that job; many of their problems are financial, but others—chiefly loneliness, the sense of having no one who cares about you—would not be much alleviated by federal grants.

Curiously, this point comes through clearly in *Final Payments*. After her father's death, Isabel gets a job with a county government, visiting the homes of people who have taken in elderly non-relatives in exchange for a government stipend, to see how well the arrangement is working. On her first day on the job, she looks at the form she's supposed to fill out at every house she visits: "There were questions about square feet of space and medical equipment, about the patient's age, the state of his health, and frequency and kind of medication. Nothing was said about how people felt and what they wanted. It said nothing about being tired or lonely or in despair. But I would stick to the form."

This she does, but it proves more difficult than she had expected. Everywhere she goes, the dependent person wants her to involve herself more deeply than her job requires. One woman reads her palm, another asks her what's black and white and red all over; an elderly roue persuades her to show him her breasts; and her final case begs for her help in carrying out a

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suicide plot. All of them are desperate for more from life than just having their physical needs met; in every case, Isabel is strongly drawn toward that deeper involvement, and has to force herself back from it.

The reason is her conviction, drawn from the all-consuming experience of ministering to her father, that caring for someone else through personal involvement inevitably destroys the possibility of leading a normal life. "It always seemed that there was a great problem with sympathy," she says to herself during one of her visits to homes. "If you really cared for the person, or even for the extremities of their situation, you ought to do something, or you ought to give up the luxury of caring."

I don't think that's true, and the best way for me to explain why is to describe my own experience with this sort of thing. I'm a Big Brother, a weekend father figure for an eleven-year-old boy named James. I should say that I do this more because I like kids and thought it would be fun than as part of my campaign for canonization; certainly I am in no danger of falling prey to the extremes of altruistic behavior that bedeviled Isabel Moore. James' father ran away when he was an infant, and James lives in an apartment complex with his mother, who works on an assembly line in a big light-industrial plant. I should say also that in the opinion of James and his mother, Gordon's formulation is right: all of the deficiencies in their lives would be solved by money. But I don't think the government should be sending them cash instead of Big Brothers sending them me. All of their essential needs—food, rent, car, clothes, television—and not much more are covered by James' mother's paycheck. What they think they *really* need to be happy—mansions, Cadillacs, servants, vacation paradises, Betamaxes—I certainly don't want my tax dollars, or anyone else's, paying for.

What I provide for James is somebody to talk to and take him places. The needs of an underindulged eleven-year-old are remarkably simple: what makes him most happy is to be taken to look at hot rods and customized vans. He and his mother are new in town, and so lack for family and friends and a deep prejudice both of them hold against Mexican-Americans makes James draw away from most of his neighbors and classmates. So to have someone other than his mother to talk to is a great pleasure for him, too. I worried at first that the whole arrangement would be too artificial; I had come to be his friend, after all, not because I loved or even liked him, or he me, but because an agency had paired us. But it has worked out. It's not love yet, but certainly we like each other. After a few weeks, he shyly asked me if we could get together twice a week instead of once, and I agreed. I think it would be better for him to have a father or a real big brother than me, but I know I'm better than nobody at all. Without either of us being consumed by it, both our lives are made a little better by the arrangement, in a way that money rather than personal contact could not have brought about.

So it seems to me that the proper reaction to the failures of the government to help people is not just to throw up our hands and revert to Social Darwinism, but to bring about an increase in voluntary altruistic activity. Altruism can fulfill more needs than government dollars; it costs less, and it need not be artificial or require on the part of the altruist a get-thee-to-a-nunnery devotion. Why, then, isn't it happening?

The main reason is not that we have become a nation of craven self-servers so much as that most of us, today, operate under what might be called the Designated-Hitter Principle. For those who don't follow baseball, this needs some explanation. A few years ago, the American League (and not the National, which has always had more class) decided to allow teams to place in the lineup a "designated hitter," whose responsibility was only to hit,

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not to field. The rule was designed to liven up the game by relieving pitchers, always weak at the plate, of their batting duties, but it also reflected a longstanding trend in American life: increasing specialization and the concomitant dilution of individual responsibility. Most intelligent people today think that if they want to make a contribution to the life of the nation, they ought to acquire an area of expertise and apply it toward the public good, thus playing a small part in a sweeping effort to help people—become, for instance, a budget analyst at HEW; or help write nursing home legislation; or expose corruption in high places.

The problem is that because of the nature of large organizations, it's a 50-50 proposition at best whether those long days of budget analysis or bill-writing or corruption-exposing will actually make America a better place. Even if your nursing home bill passes and has the intended effect, the actual helping of old people will be done by someone whose *job* it is, and that raises problems of expense and of leaving unmet the needs that unpaid personal contact fills. On the other hand, working as a volunteer in a nursing home won't change the nationwide statistics much, but it will indisputably help a few people. We read every day about some high government official who goes off to work at seven and comes home at nine, but there's only one recent example of an official who was also engaged in labors whose tangible, immediate fruits he could see. That was the late Lawrence Woodworth, the tax-policy czar of the Senate Finance Committee, who spent his nights and weekends working on the civic affairs of his tiny hometown, Cheverly, Maryland. This was always reported as a charming eccentricity of Woodworth's.

What Woodworth saw was that doing good need not be subject to the designated-hitter principle—that it did not always have to be the job of some specialist who was paid to do it. But usually designated-hitter thinking is so prevalent that it's built into policy.

Yet even if we got past that mentality, what would compel us to volunteer? The answer, as strange as the notion may seem these days, is that the volunteer spirit is not contrary to fundamental human nature. Yes, we are at base selfish creatures, but selfish in complicated ways. A parent will usually, if given the choice, sacrifice himself to save his child. When America has been genuinely threatened, people have signed up to defend it at great personal peril. The most narcissistic social climber will put in long hours on charity work if it will mean a better class of invitations. In other words, there are selfish motives—prestige, recognition, the preservation of a valued social unit—that make people behave in other than the most obviously selfish ways. In my own case, my stock with people usually goes up when I tell them I'm a Big Brother, and that's certainly part of why I do it.

So the way to encourage altruism, besides convincing people that it actually does some good, is to pluck the strings that make the music play. This is not a newly discovered secret—it's the way churches and junior leagues and Rotary Clubs and political parties have enticed people into service for years. With these institutions in relative disrepute, the government might take up the slack by glorifying altruism itself. This it could do by convincing people that they have a personal stake in the well-being of the society at large. Every laid-off New York sanitation worker must wish that ten years ago he had thought a little less about getting those extra sick days and a little more about the welfare of the city. Ten years from now, in a country where people just don't seem much to like or care about each other, it will seem pretty silly that we each went about our responsible, important jobs, did our public good, and never took the trouble to enter the life of someone who needed a more basic, personal, and compassionate form of help. ■

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Tidbits and Outrages

Gays and Dolls

For those who missed it, here's the latest letter to Ann Landers about Gay Bob:

Dear Ann Landers:

Recently a reader from Alabama wrote about a new doll for children—"Gay Bob." She was appalled at the degree to which homosexuality had been accepted. The writer fumed, "The manufacturer is a New York executive who must have lost his marbles the last time he went through the Bermuda Triangle."

Your response was one of total cynicism. "Gay Bob?" you quipped. "I'll believe it when I see it." Well, you'd better believe it because Gay Bob is now available in some fairly respectable retail stores.

I just read a newspaper story on Gay Bob and saw a picture of him, coming out of the closet and caressing another male. It seems the dolls (complete with wardrobe) were first offered through mail-order ads, but now they are appearing everywhere.

—Bryan
College Station, Tex.

Grantsmanshipmanship

You may have read about how hard it is to get a job in the civil service these days—but there's another way to get at the taxpayers' wallets, as this recent ad in *The Washington Post* points out:

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Who should attend? Anyone with a marketable skill gained through education or experience—accountants, administrators, authors, businessmen and women, college professors, counselors, designers, editors, executives, graduate students, investors, managers, manufacturers representatives, military officers, photographers, psychologists, public relations practitioners, realtors, salesmen, scientists, sociologists, teachers, and others.

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This is the consulting seminar to attend. It has been presented to enthusiastic groups in major cities throughout the country. As the *Washington Post* said in a feature article, "Consultants need advice and [illegible]ouragement, and that is where Frank Tennant, consultant to consult[illegible]omes in." Clip and save this [illegible] to yourself not to miss [illegible]anding seminar.

Saturd[illegible]

Washington Already Feeling Effects of Shah's Fall

Betty Beale of *The Washington Star* has this advice for new congressmen about their social life in Washington:

"The main impetus to social activity comes from the foreign ambassadors who have been sent here, among other reasons, to wine, dine, woo and win you to their point of view. And like the maiden fair who is being courted with flowers, fun and fancy words—you may as well relax and enjoy it.

"Unfortunately, the biggest hunk of the glamor, excitement and brilliance of Washington entertaining disappeared with the absence of Iranian Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi.

"There has not been in this city in perhaps a half century another host who entertained so frequently so many important people with such elegance and such concern for the comfort of his guests. His detractors are only those who have not witnessed firsthand his brand of diplomacy, are unacquainted with the good he has done in the community and with the respect he has earned from American officials and diplomatic colleagues.

"As the closest man to the Shah, it seems unlikely he will continue as envoy here if the Shah is no longer in power. So unless he settles in Washington, you newcomers to town will not experience those caviar and champagne parties with imported celebrities, Capital VIPs, music to dance by, and age-old Persian serenades to soothe the bitter bureaucrat."

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Leaders Who Follow and Leaders Worth Following

by Michael Nelson

There is a great riddle in American politics today, one that the fraternity of pundits is doing its best to avoid thinking through. The riddle goes like this: If, as all seem to agree, middle-class Americans have become irreversibly greedy, selfish, and bloated by "inflated expectations" (this year's political catchword), why is Edward Kennedy the most popular political leader around? After all, he is the one politician extant who is promising to take our money away and spend it on the poor. And why is Jerry Brown, the quintessential panderer to the politics of selfishness, doing so poorly—barely ten per cent against Kennedy and Jimmy Carter in the latest Gallup polls?

Op-ed page readers have been amply exposed to the kinds of shallow solutions the columnists and commentators are offering to this riddle. Kennedy's popularity, they say, is an artifact of John and Robert's popularity (then why does it grow as their memory fades?); Brown's newness has worn off (Gallup's list of America's most admired men last year included Kennedy, Carter, and Gerald Ford; since when is familiarity a liability?).

But if our journalistic elders don't have the answer, there is a political scientist who does. His name is James MacGregor Burns and his book, the latest in a 30-year series of masterworks, is called *Leadership* (Harper & Row).

Michael Nelson is a contributing editor of The Washington Monthly *and a professor of political science at Vanderbilt.*

His answer to the riddle does not lie in anything *Leadership* says about Ted Kennedy or Jerry Brown in particular—in fact, neither are mentioned, and even Jimmy Carter only gets a passing reference. Instead it comes from an attentive reading of what Burns tells us about leadership in general, drawing on classical philosophy, humanistic psychology, and a wealth of historical examples that range from Moses to Mao.

Burns' first lesson is that those who seek power for its own sake, and thus change with the public's every flicker of mood, ultimately fail even their own ambitions. That's not the line the pollsters and consultants are putting out now, but it makes good sense. "Machiavelli's practical advice was not at all practical," Burns writes. "Even amid the murderous rivalries of the Italian boot, princes behaving so wickedly and selfishly would win only short-run victories." Crumbling monuments, not glowing histories, commemorate the lives of the Ozymandiases. And who are held in greater contempt by citizens than would-be leaders who, like the French revolutionary hearing the crowd rush by, jump up every time a new poll comes out and shout: "There goes the mob. I am their leader. I must follow them!"

Jerry Brown clearly shares something of the latter attitude, which explains, I think, why his national constituency is eroding. For all we hear about Brown's uniqueness, he is really a stock character in politics: the fellow who can't stand persons but sucks up

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to "the people." Orville Schell, in the most deferential of last year's Jerry books, tells what happened when Brown was caught outside his office a couple of years ago by a small group of property-tax protesters.

"'Why don't you support a good property-tax relief bill?' one of the men asks with a mixture of nervousness and anger.

"'Well, that's a loaded question,' replies Brown with a smile. 'How do you know I don't?'

"'Pretty soon no one is going to be able to afford a house except the rich,' a woman chimes in. . . .

"'What's all this about?' Brown asks. 'You don't want to pay any more taxes?'"

Schell wrote his book when Howard Jarvis was still a gleam in the real-estate lobby's eye; he had no way of knowing that the kind of protesters Brown bantered away would later put Proposition 13 on the ballot and pass it by two-to-one. He may well have anticipated, though, that once that happened, Brown would race to the head of the mob; after all, he was their leader.

Since then, Brown and the Republicans have been outdoing each other in trying to parlay "Prop 13 fever" into a lease on the White House. But the Republicans, with their something-for-everyone-for-nothing Kemp-Roth bill (that's the one that would raise government revenues while lowering taxes drastically) have failed as miserably as Brown.

Why do these appeals to selfishness fail? Because, Burns says, they have so little to do with people's actual needs—needs that, at least in prosperous societies like ours, cause them to save their deepest commitments for leaders who speak to their better nature.

Burns supports this argument with the theories of psychologist Abraham Maslow. According to Maslow, human nature consists of a ladder of needs. The bottom three rungs are the real basics—food, clothing, and shelter; a sense of security and safety from harm; and a feeling of belonging. But give a person a full stomach, a roof over his head, and a cocoon of family or friends (describe the average American, that is), and he will be ripe to go further up the ladder. "As lower needs are satisfied," Burns concludes, "higher ones come into play."

Unfortunately, Burns overstates his case. The wisdom in Maslow's theory is not its rose-colored assumption that every day in every way we are getting better and better; it is the understanding that we have the *potential* to get better. In swallowing Maslow whole, Burns almost loses the strongest argument in his arsenal: that leadership is essential—and will be successful—precisely to the extent that it helps us fulfill that potential.

Burns nevertheless succeeds in showing why the appeals of political panderers to people's base, selfish needs—the ones they have moved beyond—ordinarily will be resented, as has happened with the Kemp-Roth Republicans. Inevitably, there will be occasions when people slide back down the ladder of needs into surliness—when their security is threatened by unemployment or lowered property values, for example—but they probably are not going to stay at that level for long, or remember fondly the Browns who played to their darker side while they were there.

Political brokers, or *transactional* leaders as Burns calls them—those like Lyndon Johnson in his Senate years—will do a little better. They deal with people at their present level of need, giving them what they consciously want in return for their support; you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. But even their brand of leadership cannot succeed permanently. There is nothing there, writes Burns, to "bind leaders and followers together in a mutual and continuing pursuit of a higher purpose."

The hero of Burns' book, then, is the FDR, the Mao, the Luther—the leader who appeals to people not as they were or are but as they might be; indeed, as they want to be if only they knew how.

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Blessed with "empathy—the vital leadership quality of entering into another person's feelings and perspectives," the *transforming* leader not only recognizes and exploits existing needs, but "looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person"; he "makes conscious what lies unconscious among followers." Most remarkable, the leader himself is transformed, moved by and with his people "to higher levels of motivation and morality."

• Vital to all this is politics; only through the give and take of conflicting ideas do leaders and followers learn about each other and themselves. A good example of what Burns is talking about is found in Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s recent biography of Robert Kennedy. Whatever flaws of excess that book may have, the chapters that deal with Kennedy's 1968 presidential campaign in the poor and blue-collar neighborhoods—his ability to rally blacks and whites together and learn from them as well—are a compelling demonstration of how a mutual transformation of leaders and led can take place. Clearly, it is the sharing of this quality of his brother's that most explains the continuing appeal of Edward Kennedy, not the mere sharing of his name.

Even with its more Pollyannaish elements excised, there is a Whitman-like optimism in Burns' theory that the eastern critics have found annoying. Almost all of voguish neo-conservatism, for example, rests on the assumption that the present politics of selfishness is a disease not of leaders but of the led. And so, the challenge: How does one square Burns' faith in the people with the apparent outpouring of meanness that underlay Proposition 13 and its step-children?

Actually, you can square it very well indeed, though in ways that Burns himself may not fully understand. A child of the New Deal, Burns seems to share the prejudice, best expressed by DeGaulle, that trying to lead the bureaucracy is mere "quarter-master business." In this view, the true leader doesn't fool with old programs, he

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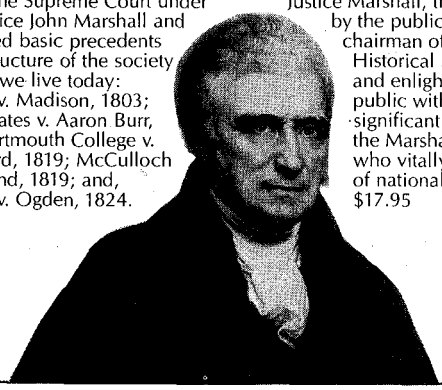

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starts new ones; similarly voters are thought to judge candidates on the basis of laws enacted, not laws efficiently implemented. From the arguments of *Leadership* alone, then, we would be forced to render a judgment for its critics—what choice does Burns' model allow us but to conclude that Proposition 13 was a rejection of the welfare state and the supposed transforming leadership that underlay its establishment?

Fortunately, Burns' theory finds support outside his book—particularly in a little volume called *Where Have All the Voters Gone?*, published last year by political scientist Everett Ladd. Ladd reports on a national survey that asked people whether "the amount of our tax money now spent" for various governmental activities should be increased, maintained, reduced a bit, or reduced entirely. The activities included aid for the poor, the black, the elderly, and the unemployed; rebuilding rundown cities; providing adequate housing where needed; and other favorite targets of the right. Before answering, people were admonished to "bear in mind that sooner or later all government spending has to be taken care of out of the taxes you and other Americans pay." The results: bad news for the politics of pandering. In no case did less than 63 per cent favor increased or continued spending, and for all but that one (welfare), support ranged from 72 per cent to 97 per cent. Remarkably, this support was uniform across class lines.

What does all this mean? Very simply, it means that in revolting against higher taxes, Americans are not selfishly repudiating the welfare state. A national survey administered last fall by *The Washington Post* concluded that "Their real concern is that it is the bureaucracy, not the public, that benefits from taxes." That is what Burns doesn't seem to realize. It is also what Jimmy Carter at one time did seem to realize—and why he may still have the opportunity to become the greatest transforming leader of our time.

People still are arguing about who elected Carter, but there is little doubt about *what* elected him: his promise to make the government work better. Thus, if I may use the oversimple example of a charity food drive, for Burns the transforming mission would be to get people to give selflessly. Carter realized that if half the food that's given selflessly is eaten at the charity headquarters, and the other half spoils, people aren't going to want to give again next year.

The tragedy of the Carter presidency thus far is that Carter didn't keep running against Washington when he got there. In part, I suppose, he was overwhelmed by the city's powerful and insular culture; as Burns points out, when you are in Washington, "Needs and aspirations 'out there' seem inchoate, remote, fugitive, opaque; the needs and expectations 'in here'—in the legislative, administrative, or judicial policy-making entity—are familiar, intimate, palpable."

Whatever the reasons, rather than rally the anti-bureaucratic popular feelings he had tapped during the campaign (as Andrew Jackson did in an era of much more primitive communications), Carter has dealt with Washington on Washington's terms, seeking the kind of incremental reform that Washingtonians are always willing to support because it doesn't really threaten them. And Carter lacks the temperament of the "transactional" leader who might achieve even such minimal advances. As a result, he has achieved next to nothing. You would think that a man who has observed the ability of sermons to end sin would know better, but apparently not.

Yet Jimmy Carter is still the politician most attuned to the people—more than Brown, the Republicans, and even Kennedy. We can only hope that he will realize, as Burns does, that leadership is more than knowing the people, it's also inspiring them by the sweep of your vision and by the daring of your advocacy. ■

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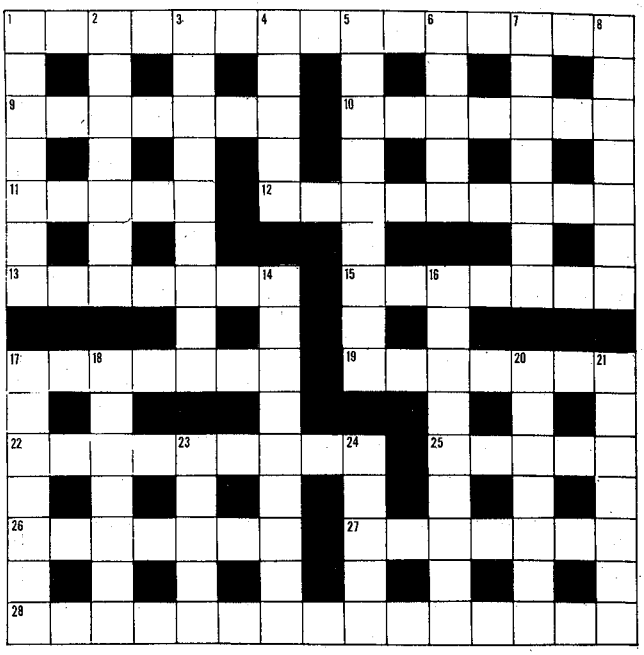
the political puzzle

by John Barclay



ACROSS

1. New set of China ordered by Carter. (7,7)
9. Turned up and turned down? (7)
10. Wash up with a couple of points doesn't change. (7)
11. We make love in Waltham ourselves. (5)
12. Rotter, sir, may be very dangerous. (9)
13. After about looks serious. (7)
15. Correspondent uses oil rags for effect. (7)
17. ITS back twitchy. (7)
19. Positions determined by catness. (7)
22. Overpowered by wild mute Donna. (9)
25. Greet Ethiopian leader again. (5)
26. Stir wet mixture in rare storm. (7)
27. Circus motives? (7)
28. New set of China ordered by Carter. (4,11)

DOWN

1. Post office's last wild cards. (7)
2. Wilder place to tour now. (3,4)
3. Tenant strike goal is cow tear?? (5,4)
4. Statesman featured in Odessa dateline. (5)
5. Short senior license somehow comes around. (9)
6. Strange route for organ prefix. (5)
7. With 50, the finish becomes a kind of library. (7)
8. Reactor designed for God. (7)
14. Enter 301 for strange result. (9)
16. Sight a pet gone astray on Roman table. (9)
17. Lacking and so forth, in a way. (5,2)
18. In sum, strange hint of insect home. (7)
20. Greek letter against wine? (7)
21. He enters for pet sins. (5,2)
23. When they lived happily ever? (5)
24. Acting God in a strange way. (5)

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2,3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word. Answers to last month's puzzle are on page 46.

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The Diplomat's Disease

by Tom Bethell

Representatives to the United Nations, who are paid munificent salaries, tax free, find it easy to believe that there are few world problems that cannot be resolved when men of high education, good will, and legal training get together and talk things over amicably. They meet at cocktail parties by the East River and are unfailingly courteous. Diplomats, they exercise their diplomatic charms on one another. The lights of Manhattan twinkle, the ice cubes clink, and soon the world seems not such a difficult place after all—amenable to memoranda and options papers if men will only be reasonable and keep their voices down. Haroun Al-Fatar, sampling canapes at one's elbow, turns out to be a charmer after all, even if he is dressed in preparation for a sandstorm; and with a few vodkas inside him, Ivan Ivanovich yonder will show his lighter side. Nations thus become personified, misleadingly embodied in acquaintances. In this light the great world-wide quarrels seem to be little more than "communications problems."

Lawyers mostly, such diplomats have been trained to believe that a document, once signed and notarized, is likely to be equally intimidating to plaintiff's attorney and foreign armies. The mentality is well personified by Cyrus Vance, who hankers after the dotted line upon which the Russians will sign just as his Wall Street banker friends did a few years ago when he was in private practice.

With their documents and handshakes, their late-night camaraderie, diplomats are able to paper over the noisy disagreements between the peoples of the various countries they represent. In short, they are apt to be a little out of touch with reality, and so it is not surprising that an institution such as the U.N., a permanent conclave of diplomats, should have become over the years *seriously* out of touch with reality.

Senator Daniel P. Moynihan, who was U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. for eight months beginning in 1975, has written about his stint, with the help of Suzanne Weaver, in *A Dangerous Place* (Little, Brown). To even the most casual television watcher, Moynihan, in his "country gentleman's" garb, and with his penchant for oratorical excess, comes across as something of a puffed-up self-promoter, egotistical beyond even the political norm. But he has a few ideas in his head, too, which is equally unusual among politicians, and on the written page he holds one's interest.

He describes some of the U. N. diplomats in characteristically undiplomatic terms, and he is particularly effective in portraying the unreal world in which many of these people live. Take, for example, his thumbnail sketch of the British ambassador to the U.N., Ivor Richard.

"He had lost his seat in the House of Commons," Moynihan writes, "and was sent to New York as there was nothing else to do with him. For him,

Tom Bethell is Washington editor of Harper's *and a contributing editor of* The Washington Monthly.

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the United Nations was the last outpost of empire, the one place on earth where Britain was still formally a major power. He enjoyed it all immensely, but with the air of a man who regarded duty-free liquor as the difference between happiness and the real world."

When people become removed from the real world and have little serious work to do in return for their lavish pay and perquisites, they will nearly always become corrupted. To Moynihan, the U.N.'s corruption took the form of a moral blindness, in particular, a highly-developed ability to ignore the basic differences between free, democratic institutions, and totalitarian ones.

Although on American soil and to a considerable extent funded by the United States, the United Nations, Moynihan persuasively argues, has in the past decade developed into a forum for the expression of opinion that was both anti-American and anti-democratic. The League of Nations in the 1930s, he points out, expelled the totalitarian powers. "If the debates in Geneva of the late 1930s had a certain irrelevance about them, they were nonetheless led by democratic statesmen," Moynihan writes. "But by the early 1970s the scene at the United Nations was very different. The world organization was growing in membership and in a certain kind of ideological authority, and this new strength was increasingly deployed on behalf of totalitarian principle and practice wholly at variance with its original purpose."

By way of illustration, Moynihan describes the gradual fleshing out of an earlier U.N. document, produced by the "Third Committee," called the *Report on the World Situation*; three years in the making, "the subject of a succession of conferences in the pleasanter parts of Europe, and of endlessly circulated drafts." The result was "a totalitarian tract." Here is how U.N. logic evolved at those pleasant conferences:

"The nations of the world were assessed in terms of social well-being. The measure of social well-being was the presence or absence of dissent. The presence of dissent indicated the absence of social well-being. Czechoslovakia came out as just about top country. The situation in the U.S. seemed terminal."

Since the corruption of the new United Nations so obviously works against the interests of the United States, some in this country have taken the view that the best course of action would be to get us out of the U.N., and vice versa. But Moynihan had a better idea: don't just dismiss the rhetoric; answer it. Point out that those so readily accusing the United States were among the worst violators of human rights—countries that were ringed by barbed wire in many instances. Moynihan's theory here, an important one, is that although the U.N.'s weapons are paper weapons, or weapons written on paper, namely words, they are no less potent for that. We are indeed ruled by words to a far greater extent than we realize. They *can* hurt, and perhaps are the most pervasive and continually used weapons in what used to be called the Atomic Age, but now is increasingly thought of as the Media Age.

It was time, then, to speak out at the United Nations, to take the U.N. Charter seriously. "It imposed precise legal obligations on members," Moynihan writes, "which by 1973 scarcely one member in four abided by." How about member nations releasing political prisoners, for example? Moynihan made this proposal, to which the response was: What does *political prisoner* mean?

"I answered that in our view a definition was not necessary and might not even be useful. The resolution was only an appeal to governments; it was not binding on them. No one would know better who was a political prisoner than the government that had put the person in prison in the first place. The Europeans were not moved. The Ambassador from Malta proposed that what needed to be done was to establish a working party to develop an agreed definition of 'political

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prisoner.' I asked him if he had in mind the procedure by which a U.N. group developed a definition of 'aggression.' He said that he did. I asked if he was aware that it had taken 17 years. He said that he was."

In the end the proposal was dropped, facing the prospect of being amended to death by the Non-Aligned bloc, including one country that saw in the proposal an opportunity to release jailed terrorists who would, by a characteristic twist of U.N. logic, be included among political prisoners (defined as "effective activists").

The State Department regarded Moynihan's modus operandi as "confrontational," and therefore counter-productive. By way of reply, Moynihan writes that the State Department is "entirely new to voting as a means of resolving disputes," which *it* does by private negotiations. But in a quasi-parliamentary setting such as the U.N. "our rhetoric was by no means extreme. Far stronger speeches are given on the floor of the U.S. Senate, not to mention the House of Commons."

Moynihan does record one small final triumph. In the penultimate session of the General Assembly he made a speech in which he quoted the Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov to the effect that the best hope for peace and human rights would be a "general political amnesty in all the world." In the course of Moynihan's speech, Yakov Malik, the Soviet ambassador to the U.N., walked out. Moynihan's description of the event is exaggerated, reflecting as much as anything the frustration of his lonely effort:

"They, for once, had quit the field," Moynihan writes. "In the final week of the General Assembly the Soviets had had to withdraw a resolution in the face of our scorn, and had to walk out of the Assembly itself as they could not bear our contempt. . . . Malik, having lived his life in a world of lies, had fled before the truth."

In the end Moynihan was maneuvered out. It would be helpful if the story of how this happened, precisely, were more straightforwardly told. One gets the impression that Moynihan himself is a little vague about the details. The proximate cause, of course, was a James Reston column noting that "Messrs. Ford and Kissinger support him in public and deplore him in private." Theodore H. White called Moynihan the next day and said: "You know you have to go, don't you?" Moynihan replied that he had just put a sheet of paper in his typewriter and had written, "Dear Mr. President. . . ."

It's a pity, really, that Moynihan went along with the peculiar Washington convention that Reston's column can reliably be construed as transmitting the thoughts of policymakers, a convention that in this instance exempted Kissinger from having to make an unpleasant phone call. How one wishes that Moynihan had adopted his best "provocative" pose and said that Reston must have surely been making it all up—a response that would have forced Kissinger out into the open.

Kissinger himself emerges in the book as a Machiavellian pessimist, who by this time "was not really on top of events any longer. . . he was worn out. His power. . . truly was ebbing." He was trying to negotiate "another 'decent interval,' in this case for the West itself. He was doing this, as I saw it, out of despair that the West would ever come to its senses and realize the imminent danger of its being overmastered. . . . His pessimism, even disgust, with the West was deeper than anything that could be touched by events."

Moynihan remains an optimist despite all that he saw and heard at the U.N., and the example he set there is, in the end, inspiring. His reminder that "the world is a dangerous place and that not everyone knows this" may be needed most of all in the world of professional policymakers, who all too easily can convince themselves that if only we are diplomatic, and accommodating to the demands of others, then everyone will love us. ■

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Richard Reeves on Political Books

This is the story of The Meyer Davis Memorial Crime Wave, as I remember it. Sometime in the late 1960s, maybe 1968, Arthur Gelb, then the assistant metropolitan editor of *The New York Times*, decided to move back to New York City from Westchester County. The moving van was parked in front of his new place on the Upper West Side of Manhattan and person or persons unknown stole a couple of end tables or something from the truck. The next morning a very angry Artie Gelb came to work and noticed that, overnight, Meyer Davis, the bandleader, had been mugged in Central Park. One paragraph? A couple? No, the Davis story was played on page one—and, for two or three weeks, so were a series of other bits and pieces of routine New York mayhem. Newspapers and television in the city and in other cities responded in kind, and soon no street in America was safe.

The reason for telling that story is that Herbert J. Gans, a sociologist of distinguished and deserved reputation, has figured out that such are the ways the news business really operates. *Deciding What's News*, just published by Pantheon Books, is the 371-page result of his discovery. "The length of this book alone," he writes on page 279, "should demonstrate that there is no single or simple explanation of the news; but if a handful of explanatory factors had to be singled out, I suggest that of all the considerations, those governing the choice of sources are of prime significance."

Richard Reeves is the author of Convention. *His column is a regular feature of* The Washington Monthly.

Gans studied, over a period of more than ten years, the news operations of *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines and the CBS and NBC networks. In the end, his most interesting observations and data are in identifying who are the sources—a small group—of American national news. One usually reliable and very important source is the reporter or editor who determines what will be printed or shown—in this case, Gelb. Gans actually has discovered some of the secrets—for instance the fact that most stories on high schools, colleges, and the youth culture originate with the children of editors.

"When I began my fieldwork," Gans says, "I assumed that journalists, especially reporters, knew more about America than anyone else. . . but this is not the case. Journalists obtain their information about America from their customary sources (mainly public officials); from what they themselves read in the paper (mainly the *Times*); and, because they have trouble crossing the social barriers that separate them from strangers, from what they learn from peers and personal contacts, notably relatives and friends."

So, according to one survey cited by Gans, an analysis of 2,850 domestic and foreign stories in the *Times* and *The Washington Post* shows that 78 per cent of them came from public officials. His own surveys indicate that newsmagazine and television news is sharply divided into two source/subject categories: Knowns and Unknowns. The Knowns—political, economic, social, and cultural celebrities—routinely account for 70 to

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85 per cent of the news product. The biggest known of all, the President, accounted for 20 per cent of all domestic news all by himself, and his cabinet accounted for a separate aggregate total of more than 20 per cent. When Unknowns managed to crack the news it was usually for breaking the law.

"In theory sources can come from anywhere," Gans writes, "in practice, their recruitment and their access to journalists reflect the hierarchies of nation and society. The President of the United States has instantaneous access to all news media whenever he wants; the powerless must resort to civil disturbances to obtain it."

The example he uses after that makes the point again: In 1967, only 13 per cent of *Newsweek*'s stories on the war in Vietnam quoted enlisted men.

Gans, in fact, does a hell of a job in demolishing the myths of an anti-establishment press. "In social and economic terms," he writes, "the news especially values the order of the upper-class and upper-middle-class sectors of society, though it may make fun of some of their very rich members. . . . The magazines tend, actually, to universalize upper-middle-class practices as if they were shared by all Americans. A significant example took place in the early years of the Vietnam war, when anti-war protest was limited almost entirely to students on elite campuses but was, by implication, projected to the entire college population. . . . With some oversimplification, it would be fair to say that the news supports the social order of public, business, and professional, upper-middle-class, middle-aged, and white male sectors of society. . . . The news upholds the legitimacy of holders of formal authority as long as they abide by the relevant enduring values, both in public and private realms."

What are the "relevant enduring values?" Gans argues that they are the same as the values of the Progressive movement of the early 20th century—that is, self-righteously elitist. "The resemblance is often uncanny," he says, "as in the common advocacy of honest, meritocratic, and anti-bureaucratic government, and in the shared antipathy to political machines and demogogues, particularly of populist bent. . . responsible capitalism. . . the dislike of bigness. . . the defense of nature."

It's a good look at the press. Unfortunately, in conclusion, Gans starts talking about a scheme to provide "multiperspectival news." A worthy goal, no doubt, but he wants to do it with an Endowment for News, something like the National Endowment for the Arts, which would provide "no-strings" government money for alternative journalism projects. It sounds naive to anyone who has mucked around in public television and seen the strings on the "no-strings" money that flows there; in my experience, public television folk are a lot more afraid of Washington than commercial television types are of sponsors. But if Gans wants to push the idea, he could begin by having dinner with Artie Gelb, who is now deputy managing editor of the *Times*—or by stealing some of his furniture. ■

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political book notes

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American Academics: Then and Now. Logan Wilson. Oxford, $13.95.

As It Happened: A Memoir. William S. Paley. Doubleday, $14.95.

The Celebration of Heroes: Prestige as a Control System. William J. Goode. University of California, $18.50.

The Corporate Personality: An Inquiry Into the Nature of Corporate Identity. Wally Olins. Mayflower, $12.50.

The Day America Crashed. Tom Schachtman. Putnam, $10.95.

The Environmental Protection Hustle. Bernard Frieden. MIT, $12.50.

The Idea of the American South. Michael O'Brien. Johns Hopkins, $16.

How the Pentagon manipulates the news

Minimum Disclosure

By JUERGEN ARTHUR HEISE

Although the Vietnam war is behind us, managed news is still a way of life at the Department of Defense. Both commanding officers and information officers at all levels of command still don't understand their obligation to present all the news—and they are often completely unaware of the Freedom of Information Act. After presenting many case studies, the author explores what must be done to change this situation.

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The Ides of March Conspiracy: The Year the IRS Got What It Deserves. Clyde Matthews. Arbor House, $9.95. While Matthews has fashioned a serious takeoff point for his novel—the techniques, in a cybernetic society, for real and potential manipulation, for governmental invasion of privacy, and even for international blackmail—his creative data bank for plotting could use some reprogramming. The story becomes a mishmash of undernourished motivations, either unlikely or predictable dramatic turns, and, in a heavy effort for plausibility, the kitchen-sink pile of devices of federal agency dirty work from our recent past.

—Patricia Nosher

Innocents of the West: Travels Through the Sixties. Joan Colebrook. Basic, $15.

Japan, Korea, and China: American Perceptions and Policies. William Watts, George R. Packard, Ralph N. Clough, Robert B. Oxnam. Lexington, $15.95. America's primary concern with the world around us is rapidly shifting from Europe to Asia. In 1977, for the first time our trade with Asia surpassed our trade with Europe. Trade between Japan and the United States is the largest that has ever taken place between two nations across an ocean. A new era, with profound economic and strategic implications, has opened between China and the United States. Even our relations with the Soviet Union will increasingly be focused on that nation as an Asian rather than European power.

Japan, Korea, and China is one of a growing number of books that address these changing perspectives. The authors are at their best in discussing the relationship between the United States and Japan—in their view the most important bilateral relationship each of the two will have in the years ahead. Unfortunately, the section on China is largely a recital of the pros and cons of normalization, which has been overtaken by events.

—Leonard Reed

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Life in Organizations: Workplaces as People Experience Them. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Barry A. Stein, eds. Basic, $17.50/$6.95.

A New America? Stephen R. Graubard, ed. Norton, $12.95.

The Pendulum and the Toxic Cloud: The Course of Dioxin Contamination. Thomas Thomas Whiteside. Yale, $15/$4.95. On July 10, 1976, a white cloud rose from a Swiss-owned chemical plant north of Milan, Italy, and drifted south, settling over the small community of Seveso. The deadly cloud and its contents are the centerpiece of author Thomas Whiteside's indictment of the chemical industry and those charged with regulating it. In particular, he is concerned with a chemical byproduct known as dioxin.

Dioxin, Whiteside writes, was present not only in the Seveso cloud, but also in the herbicides with which the Vietnamese countryside was doused and defoliated in the late 1960s. And while the U.S. military eventually acknowledged the toxin's danger to human life and banned the use of such herbicides in Vietnam, millions of acres of pasture and cropland in this country are being sprayed with it to this day.

The weakest part of Whiteside's argument is his primary example: while the Seveso cloud clearly had at least some impact on the health of many of those exposed to its residue, Whiteside admits late in the book that it has produced a "relatively light scattering of ill-effects so far." But his portrait of bumbling investigators and government officials, slow evacuation, sloppy decontamination and quarantine, and a wary and unhappily displaced populace, goes a long way toward explaining why the record on Seveso is unreliable.

—*Geoffrey O'Gara*

The Price of Defense: A New Strategy for Military Spending. Boston Study Group. Times, $15. In the Yom Kippur War, the Egyptians managed to knock out 130 expensive Israeli tanks in two hours with inexpensive antitank missiles. What this incident demonstrates, concludes the Boston Study Group, is that the advantage in modern conventional warfare has shifted dramatically to the defense. Since the same advantage accrues to our forces defending Western Europe, they say, it is wrong to assume that we must match the Russians dollar-for-dollar along that front. Using a few of these insights, and a general willingness to question the goals of our military policy, *The Price of Defense* provides a good, readable, example of the sort of analysis that liberal "doves" should have been engaging in for years. The book persuasively argues for a military posture that, according to the authors, would afford the U.S. greater security at 40 per cent less than we are now spending.

At the strategic (i.e. nuclear) level, the book argues that there is no defense for a direct attack on the U.S. by armed ballistic missiles. So our defense depends on our ability to assure destruction in return—and, above all, we must avoid threatening our adversary into a preemptive strike. To these ends, the authors advocate eliminating our redundant nuclear strike force, leaving only our virtually invulnerable sub-launched missiles and a few land-based ICBM's as a hedge. They would prohibit work on advanced technology that might give the U.S. the

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apparent ability to launch a successful first strike.

At the level of conventional guns and bombs, the group advocates a severe reduction in the forces maintained for the purpose of joining "brushfire" wars, on the grounds that this readiness only invites superpower confrontation. Here the authors seem to underestimate the extent to which America's post-Vietnam inhibitions more than counteract any such tendency.

—*Dan Ambrose*

The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt. Edmund Morris. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, $15.95.

The Streets Were Paved With Gold. Ken Auletta. Random House, $12.95. An excerpt was published in the February 1979 issue of *The Washington Monthly*.

Vicious Circles: The Mafia in the Marketplace. Jonathan Kwitny. Norton, $12.95. In 1976, an article by Professor Dwight Smith in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political Science* concluded that the Mafia doesn't exist, that it is a phony notion Americans embrace because of their "conspiracy phobia." Kwitny, a reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*, whose exhaustive research for this book was done in streets, alleys, bars, police corridors, union halls, and similar grimy places far from academe, has a message for Smith:

"Yes, Professor, there is a Mafia."

Kwitny's book is not concerned with porno, prostitution, and other "victimless crimes," but with the right of Americans to buy food and clothing without paying a tithe to support a network of scoundrels; the right of the consumer to know that the meat that has passed government inspection is not contaminated; the right to patronize merchants who choose their products or ingredients on the basis of cost and quality, free from intimidation; and the right of a union man to know that he is not being gypped out of his pension. All of these rights are being systematically violated by the operations of the Mafia.

His coverage of the infiltration of the Mafia into the fabric of the American marketplace, including banking and finance, is sometimes cursory, if only because the ground to be covered is so enormous. But in some of his accounts he is devastating—as when he discusses the meat industry and the Teamsters.

—*Leonard Reed*

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Deciding on nuclear energy.

One side of an issue facing the electric power industry.

Nuclear power is not the energy form of the future. It is very much a part of the present. And important national decisions must be made if it is to continue to make its contribution to energy supply.

Nuclear plants have been generating electricity commercially in the U.S. since 1957. Today, 71 plants provide 12% of this country's electricity—about as much as we get from hydro-electric dams, more than *all* electric power generated in the country in 1946. In some areas, most of the electricity people use is nuclear. 95 more nuclear stations are now under construction. The number of countries with nuclear power programs is now 53.

A clean record

Nuclear generation of electricity has grown because of its safety, reliability and economy. No other industry started with a greater appreciation of potential hazards. None is operated under more stringent occupational and environmental safeguards.

The American Medical Association's Council on Scientific Affairs recently reported that, of the principal fuels available for electricity production over the next 25 years, nuclear power has the lowest adverse impact on health.

The near future

Nuclear power makes economic sense in meeting growing energy demands and in reducing the nation's dependence on oil and gas.

Unless we try to rely entirely on coal production for generation, or to shut down the economy until forms like solar power prove affordable, nuclear power will become increasingly important to the near-term well-being of the country.

Nuclear policy

The electric utility industry agrees with the many expert opinions that ultimate disposal of radioactive wastes presents no insurmountable technical problems. Several acceptable methods are available.

But failure of the federal government to implement available nuclear waste disposal technology is being mistakenly seen as an indication that the nuclear waste issue cannot be resolved.

Recently, we urged the Administration to take advantage of extensive, existing technical and scientific knowledge and to implement a program on a rigid schedule to provide a spent-fuel storage facility and a waste repository at the earliest practical time. These steps are necessary to assure the continued operation of nuclear power plants, to minimize the uncertainty that has been slowing down commitments for future nuclear plants in this country, and to separate the waste disposal issue from the licensing of new power plants.

Congress has divided responsibility for the national waste management program among several agencies of the federal government. The Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency have elements of responsibility.

Now, Congress must provide additional effective legislative guidance for the waste management and spent-fuel storage programs.

The long run

Opinion polls repeatedly show that majorities of the American people support the use of nuclear energy to generate electricity. Where nuclear plants are in operation, the percentages are even higher.

If we are to be able to take advantage of the economic and energy-supply opportunities presented by nuclear energy, both in the near term and the long term, the federal government will need to take responsible action today.

If you would like to read more about nuclear energy as a source of electricity or learn more about the management of high-level radioactive wastes and spent fuel, write to us: Edison Electric Institute, 90 Park Ave., New York, NY 10016. We will be glad to send you more information.

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